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SECRET
HISTORIES,
NOVELS, and POEMS,
Written by
Mrs. Eliza Haywood.

V O L. III.

- CONTAINING
I. IDALIA: Or, *The Unfortunate Mistress.*
A Novel.
II. The SURPRISE: Or, *Constancy rewarded.*
III. The FATAL SECRET: Or, *Constancy*
in Distress.
IV. FANTOMINA: Or, *Love in a Maze.*

The THIRD EDITION.

L O N D O N:

Printed for A. BETTESWORTH and C. HITCH, at the
Red-Lion in *Pater-Noster-Row*; D. BROWNE, at the
Black-Swan without *Temple-Bar*; T. ASTLEY, at
the *Rose* over-against the North-Door of *St. Paul's*;
and T. GREEN, at *Charing-Cross*. 1732.

SECRET

HISTORIES

NOVELS AND POEMS

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III.



- I. IDOLIA: OR, THE MISTRESS OF THE MISTRESS.
- II. THE SURPRISE: OR, CONFESSIONS.
- III. THE FATAL SECRET: OR, CONFESSIONS.
- IV. FANTOMINA: OR, THE MISTRESS OF THE MISTRESS.

The Third Edition.

L O N D O N :

Printed for A. Kesteven and C. Hitchcock, at the
Red Lion in St. Dunstons Lane; D. Browne, at the
Black Swan without Bishopsgate; T. Aspley, at the
the Rose over-against the North-Door of St. Dunstons;
and T. Green, in Chancery-Lane, 1732.

I D A L I A:

OR, THE

Unfortunate Mistress.

A

NOVEL.

IN THREE PARTS.

By Mrs. ELIZA HAYWOOD.

*Under how hard a Fate are Women born!
Priz'd to their Ruin, or expos'd to Scorn:
If we want Beauty, we of Love despair;
And are besieg'd, like Frontier Towns, if Fair.*
WALLER.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

A 2

I D A L I A

OR THE

Unfortunate Milliners.

N O V E L



In the

By Mrs. ELIZA HAYWOOD.

Under this hard a Tale is told of a young
Princess to her King, or expected to become
If the young Beauty, one of those despised
And one beloved, like the Princess, if fair.
W. ALLEN.

The Fourth Edition.



I D A L I A:

OR, THE

Unfortunate Mistress.

P A R T I.

IF there were a Possibility that the Warmth and Vigour of Youth could be temper'd with a due Consideration, and the Power of judging rightly, how easy were it to avoid the Ills which most of us endure? How few would be unhappy? With what Serenity might the *Noon* of Life glide on, could we account with Reason for our *Morning* Actions? We hear, indeed, daily Complaints of the Cruelty of *Fate*; but if we examine the Source, we shall find almost all the Woes we languish under are self-caus'd; and that either to pursue the Gratification of some unruly Passion, or shun the Performance of an incumbent Duty, those Misfortunes which so fill the World derive their Being, and would more justly merit *Condemnation* than *Compassion*, were not the Fault too universal.

Do N *Bernardo de Bellsache*, a Nobleman of *Venice*, had a Daughter whom he esteem'd the Blessing of his Age; and had her Conduct been such as might have been expected from the Elegance of her Genius, and the Improvements of Education, which his Fondness had indulged her in, she had indeed been the Wonder of her Sex. Imagination cannot form a Face more exquisitely lovely; such Majesty, such Sweetness, such a Regularity in all her Features, accompany'd with an Air at once so soft, so striking, that while she *commanded*, she *allured*, and *forced* what she *entreated*. Nor was her Shape and Mien less worthy Admiration; it was impossible for any thing to be more exactly proportion'd than the *former*; and for the *latter*, it had a Grace peculiar to itself: The least and most careless Motion of her Head or Hand, was sufficient to captivate a Heart. In fine, her Charms were so infinitely above Description, that it was necessary to see her, to have any just Notion of her. — But, alas! to what End serv'd all this Beauty, these uncommon Qualifications, but to make her more remarkably unhappy? She had a *Wit*, which gain'd her no fewer Adorers than her other Perfections; yet not enough to defend her from the Assaults of almost every Passion human Nature is liable to fall into. The Greatness of her Spirit (which from her Childhood had been untameable, or was render'd so thro' the too-great Indulgence of her doating Parents) made her unable to endure Controul, disdainful of Advice, obstinate, and peremptory in following her own *Will* to what Extremes soever it led her: The Consequence of such a Disposition could not be expected to be very fortunate, but it brought on her such dreadful Inconveniencies, as all who find in themselves the least Propensity to be of such a Humour, ought to tremble at the Repetition of, and exert their utmost Reason to extirpate.

IDALIA (for that was the Name of this lovely Inconsiderate) had no sooner arrived at her fourteenth Year, than she attracted the Eyes of all the young

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young Noblemen of *Venice*; scarce a Heart but sigh'd for her: The Shrine of our *Blessed Lady of Loretto* was never throng'd with greater Numbers of *Religious Devotees* than *Don Bernardo's House* was by those of the Young and Gay; and happy did they think themselves, whose Birth or Fortune gave them any just Cause to hope the Pretensions they brought would be an Offering worth Acceptance. There were some too (as no Climate is barren of *Fops*) who had the Vanity, without either of these Advantages, to promise themselves Success; of this last Number was *Florez*, one, who, if he had not been possess'd with more Assurance than is ordinarily to be found even among the most tenacious, would not have presumed, tho' his Passion had been really as violent as he endeavour'd to make it appear, to have declared it. He was descended from a Family in which there never had been one whose Actions had entitled him to bear Arms; the Height of his Parent's Ambition had been to prefer him, when a Child, to be Page to *Don Ferdinand*, Nephew to the *Doge*. With this young Nobleman he had travell'd; and all the Education he was Master of was owing to this Advantage, as was the Post he possess'd in the Army, to his Favour: For being naturally of a designing sordid Disposition, by falling in with all his Humours, promoting his Pleasures, and flattering his Vices, he had wound himself so much into the good Will of his Lord, that he refused him nothing. The Intimacy with which he was treated by so great a Man, and the sudden Elevation of his Fortune, join'd to some fulsome Praises of his Beauty, and fine Wit, which those Women, who are paid for their Favours, generally lavish on the Person who makes Choice of them, gave him so good an Opinion of his own Merit, that he thought it an Impossibility for any Woman to be insensible of it; and look'd on the Attainment of *Idalia*, notwithstanding the Multitude of her Admirers, and the vast Possessions she was likely to be Mistress of, as a Thing not at all difficult.

BUT whatever he imagined to himself, *Bernardo* had Sentiments quite different from these: He no sooner discovered his Design, than he forbid him his House in Terms which sufficiently told him he was in earnest, and chid his Daughter for entertaining a Proposal so unsuitable to her Birth, with more Sharpness than the Manner in which he had ever behaved to her, could give her Leave to think was in his Nature: But as the Vanity and unthinking Pride which sway'd the Actions of this young Lady had shewed itself in the encouraging all who pretended to admire her, of what Degree soever they were, so now the Obstinacy of her Humour began to appear, in the Uneasiness she felt at her Father's Commands, never to see *Florez* more. Amidst the Multiplicity of her Adorers, she thought herself undone to miss the Addresses of a single Votary, and could not bear to lose the Conversation of a Man whose Eyes and Tongue were perfectly skilled in the Art of Flattery and Dissimulation, and had given her so many Informations of her Power. And wholly leaving herself to the Dictates of her Impatience, grew almost distracted to think she was debarred the Enjoyment of any thing she found a Pleasure in. She began immediately to lessen her Regard for her too-long-indulgent Father, which by Degrees ripened to a Contempt of him, and ended in a Resolution to act in every thing according to her Inclinations, without giving herself any Pain how far it would be consonant to his.

IN this ruinous Disposition it came into her Head to write to *Florez*; not that she was really in Love with him, or had yet any Notion of that Passion; but *Vanity*, that reigning Faculty of her Soul, prompted her to use her utmost Efforts for the retrieving a Heart she began to fear was estranged. And indeed, this Conjecture was not in the least unreasonable; for had he, in Sincerity, been so entirely devoted to her as he had once endeavoured to persuade her he was, *Love*, always fruitful in Invention, would have furnish-
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ed him with some Stratagem, either to have seen her, or conveyed a Letter to her; for some Weeks had passed between the Time of his being forbid his Visits, and that in which she writ. She did not fail to upbraid him with his Coldness, but withal let him know she had good Nature enough to pardon it; desired an Answer; and that for the future, if she was really happy enough to retain any Place in his Remembrance, he would let no Day escape without giving her some Assurances of it. In short, no Woman, who felt the severest Pangs of desperate dying Love, could write more passionately, or express a greater Concern at being abandoned by the Man her Soul was fond of, than what the Spirit of *Coquetry* taught the Pen of the inconsiderate *Idalia*. She concluded her Epistle with a hearty Wish, *Grant Heaven!* (said she to herself) *that I may once more have him in my Power to use him as I please, let the Consequence be what it will.* She bribed a Servant to deliver it, and bring an Answer back: But the Uneasiness she was in till the Return of her Messenger was such, as whoever had been witness of, could not have imagined to have sprung from any other Source than Love. But to such a Degree does the immoderate Love of Praise transport some People, that to lose any Opportunity of receiving it, is a Torment equal to that which others feel in a Disappointment of the most essential Blessings.

THE Return of her Emissary brought but little Ease to the Suspence she had endured while he was gone: *Florez*, indeed, had sent by him; but his Letter appeared so different from those she had formerly received from him, that the Hand was all that shewed them writ by the same Person. A Penetration like her's could easily discern the Alteration; she found the Style was forced, formal, and affected; and where he said he still continued to adore her, and should never cease to do so, it was in such a Manner as plainly shewed his Heart had no Part in dictating such Expressions. And, in Truth, never Woman was more

disappointed in her Aim, than was this Lady: In spite of the Attractions she was Mistress of, *Florez* had either an Insensibility of them, or had Resolution enough to withstand the Emotions of his Tenderness, whenever he found them contrary to his Interest. 'Tis probable, by what after ensued, that a Daughter of *Don Bernardo's*, though never so disagreeable, would have had Charms sufficient to have retained his Adorations; but *Idalia*, all lovely as she was, without the Addition of that Fortune her Father's Consent must give, had no longer any Charms to hold him.

'Tis easy to imagine it was no small Shock to her Pride, to find the Advances she had made were received with no more Warmth: But suffering all Consideration to be wholly drowned in the overflowing Folly which at present possessed her, she continued daily by Letters to give him Occasion to believe there was nothing on Earth so desirable as his Conversation; and that it was not impossible she might be prevailed on to become his Wife, though by it she should lose a Father. But there was not the least Pressure in any of his Answers, which testified he wished she should run so great a Risque. This so nettled her, that at last, 'tis probable, she would have looked upon him, as indeed he was, a Conquest far unworthy of the Pains she had taken. She was just beginning to give over all Thoughts of him, when her ill Fate, taking the Advantage of the *Baseness* of his Nature, and the unaccountable *Fantasticness* of hers, gave a sudden Turn to this Adventure, which was to terminate in her utter Undoing.

IF there could be any thing alledged in the Defence of Vanity, the fair *Idalia*, on the account of her Youth, her Beauty, Birth, and Fortune, had certainly more to plead in her Behalf, than where there were none of these Advantages: *Florez*, who had nothing distinguishably valuable either in his Person or Accomplishments, and was of a Sex in which that *Foible* is far less excusable than in the weaker, had yet as large a Share: He could not imagine himself beloved

beloved by a Woman so admired by all the World without communicating the Secret. To those *Insensibles* all the Pleasure of an *Amour* consists in the *Reputation* of it: To be accounted well in the Esteem of a Person of *ordinary* Qualifications, yields them infinitely more Satisfaction than the *real Enjoyment* of one of the most *excellent* could do. It is not therefore to be wondered at, that a Man, who had neither Love nor Honour to restrain him, triumphed in an Affair like this: He could not hear the Charms of *Idalia* mentioned, without letting the Company know how much it was in his Power to become Master of them; and to prove the Truth of what he said, exposed her Letters, those fatal and undisputable Testimonials of her Folly. Few that had any Acquaintance with him were Strangers to his Happiness; but none more envied his good Fortune than his Patron Don *Ferdinand*. This young Lord was of a Disposition exceeding amorous: He long had viewed *Idalia* with those Desires which it was common for her to inspire; but finding in himself not the least Propensity to Marriage, and believing it impossible to obtain her by any other Means, had endeavoured to stifle the hopeless Passion by other Amusements, till hearing the Condescensions she had made to one whom he had so much Power over, he immediately had it in his Thoughts to make use of it for the Gratification of his Wishes. There needed but little Ceremony in the communicating his Design to a Person so much his Creature; nor durst *Florez*, if he had had an Inclination, oppose what he required; but on the contrary, he was glad of an Opportunity of serving him in a Manner which would so considerably advance his Interest with him. It was presently agreed between them, that he, the favoured Lover, should write to *Idalia* in the most passionate and moving Strain imaginable, assuring her, That nothing was so insupportable as the Pangs of Absence; that he died to see her; and intreated her to grant him that Favour at the House of a particular Friend, whom he mentioned in the

Letter, and gave her Directions how to find it. This Epistle being dictated by the impatient Wishes of the amorous *Ferdinand*, had infinitely more Force of Persuasion in it, than any thing the insensible *Florez* could have said without his Assistance; and they both promised themselves it would succeed as they would have it, to engage her to come to the Place appointed for the Affignation; which was a House where they had frequently rioted in those dissolute Enjoyments Youth is too prone to be fond of, and the People who lived in it entirely at the Devotion of *Don Ferdinand*.

By this cursed Contrivance was the rash unthinking *Idalia* betrayed: She received the fraudulent Mandate, swallowed the well-dressed artful Flattery it contained with a prodigious deal of Pleasure, and returned an Answer of Consent. Not that she was without a Thought at the Liberty he took in naming a Place of Affignation, since it had been much more agreeable to the *Venetian* Address, to have watched her coming out, followed her to Church, or any other publick Place, and at an humble Distance gazed upon her: But she imputed his Boldness to the Violence of his Passion; and having no other Design than to make him the Slave of her Beauty, resolved to see him, the better to secure her Conquest, and punish him *hereafter* by her Contempt and Coldness, for his *present* Presumption.

ADORNED, and every Charm illustrated with all the Aids of Art, assured of Victory, and already exulting with a prideful Scorn for the Triumphs of her Eyes, she set out, under the Pretence of going to *Vespers*, attended only by one Servant; whom she sent back immediately to fetch her *Beads*, which she told him she had forgot; and as soon as she saw herself at Liberty, turned another Way, and went directly to the Place appointed. It was easy for her to find the House, the good Woman of it waited at the Door for her Approach, and conducted her in: But it is hard to say whether her Astonishment or Fear was most pre-

predominant, when, instead of *Florez* she found herself accosted by *Don Ferdinand*. Glad would she have been to have had it in her Power to have gone back, and pretending to have come in only through Mistake, would fain have struggled to the Door. No, lovely Creature, cried the over-joyed *Ferdinand* (who guessing what her Intent would be, had taken care to hold fast both her Hands) to what good Star soever I am indebted for this Blessing, I should prove myself strangely unworthy of it, could I so easily be brought to quit it.— I long have languished with a Passion great as your own unequalled Charms, and for an Opportunity to tell you so, would have hazarded more than my Life.— Hear it then now with Patience, nor hate the Man who aims at no higher Happiness from your Favour, than to be pitied, and forgiven. These last Words dissipated great Part of the Terror she had been in; and reassuming that Air of Haughtiness which her Disorders had a little abated, I know not, my Lord, answered she, whether I should consider what you have said to me as the Effects of Gaiety, or Sincerity: If to the former, I ought not to resent it, because few Men but would have behaved in the same Manner to a Woman whom Chance had so unexpectedly thrown in their Way: But if to the latter, when future Services shall testify it, I owe more to the Quality and Merits of *Don Ferdinand*, than not to acknowledge myself obliged to his Regard. You are divinely good, resumed the other, and I hope, since I am but too sensible, whatever Accident occasioned me this Happiness, it was not Chance, but the Design of meeting a more favoured Lover brought you here, you will permit me to entertain you with the History of my Passion, at least till his Approach shall cut me off.

THAT Serenity which had so lately returned to the Soul of *Idalia*, at hearing this, again forsook her; she had no Room to doubt the Secret of her Correspondence with *Florez* was discovered: And, in a Moment had a thousand various Conjectures by what Means, but had too great an Opinion of her own Power, and his Passion, to hit upon the right. She was

was silent for some Time, not knowing whether it was best to confess, or deny the Truth of what he alledged; at last, reflecting on the Confidence with which Don *Ferdinand* had spoke, was an Evidence he was assured of it, and that the coming of *Florez*, whom she expected every Moment would render all she could say ineffectual, concluded on acknowledging the Reality; but withal told him, as she very well might, that it was not to gratify any other Passion than the Love of a little unmeaning Gallantry in her Humour, which had moved her to consent to such a Meeting. This Declaration seemed to transport the Soul of him it was made to; and he continued to address her with so much elegant Tenderness, and lively Assurances of the Influence of her Charms, that the Conversation would have afforded her an Infinity of Satisfaction, had it been at any other Time and Place; but the Disrespect she imagined herself treated with by the Delay of *Florez*, poisoned the Felicity which else the gaining a new Adorer of Don *Ferdinand*'s Rank would have given her: She sat for a considerable Time divided between Pain and Pleasure, till it growing late, and not knowing what Excuse to make for being so long missed at Home, she rose to take her Leave: But, alas! she was now in a Place whence it was not usual for one of her Sex to return as they came in, and in the Power of one who was not of a Humour to put a Constraint on his Inclinations. She soon perceived the fatal Truth, and now condemned the indiscreet Hazard she had run, resolved in her Mind never to be guilty of the like, and begged of Heaven to protect her Honour, and inspire her with some Artifice with which she might elude the Danger which so imminently threatened her.

BUT what Miseries sometimes does one rash Action bring on the whole Series of Life? Repentance, and a sudden Abhorrence of that Vanity which had led her into this Snare, were now in vain: Her evil Genius watched this Point of Time, when every friendly Planet was oppressed, and only raging Influences

ences governed to ruin her, at *once*, for ever. At first, with Sighs, with Tears, with humble Adorations, the amorous *Ferdinand* sought to melt her into Kindness; but they failing, the burning Passion threw off all Restraint, his every Action spoke his Resolution, and told her he would not be denied.—Plainly she read it in his fiery Eyes, and felt it in his eager Grasplings.—The Reader's Imagination here can only form an Idea of that Confusion, that mingled Rage and Horror, which, at this dreadful Exigence, filled the Soul of the unhappy *Idalia*! 'Tis not in Words to represent it!—Sometimes, disdainful of the injurious Attempt, her stormy Anger vented itself in Curses; but then remembering how little she had the Power of resisting whatever his wild Desires might prompt him to commit, she sunk to milder Treatment, wept, begged him to desist:—Prayers, Threatenings,--Entreaties, and Revilings, alternately succeeded, as the different Agitations rose in her Breast, till at last she had no Breath to utter either. Her Spirits, fatigued with this unusual Hurry, and all her Limbs tired in the Struggle with such unequal Strength, she fainted as he held her in his Arms. As much bent as he was on making himself Master of his Wishes, he could not resolve to indulge them so far as to take any immodest Advantage of this Opportunity; but endeavouring by gentle Means to bring her to herself, and expressing the most tender Concern imaginable for the Disorder he had occasioned her, she began, at the Return of Thought, to hope his Sentiments were changed; and falling on her Knees the Moment she recovered, *O my Lord*, said she, *if Honour, Love, or Pity, have any Influence over your Soul, by that I would conjure you to forbear to fright a wretched Maid, whom Inadvertency has thrown into your Power. Permit me to depart uninjured, unpoluted, and here I swear by every thing that's sacred, of all your Sex you shall be dearest to me.--O moving Words, interrupted Ferdinand, what Wonders may they not inforce! Is it then possible that you do not hate me?---*

But,

But, continued he with a Sigh, *how full of Vanity must I be to credit them? --- No, Madam, no, the Artifice is plain; you fear my Power, and would delude my Wishes by a false Hope; but know I love too well, too violently, to leave ought to hereafter, which this Moment may bestow. — If you would have me think you mean my Happiness, give me an instant Proof: — Now make me blest, and I shall feed Imagination with Hope of future Favours.* — In speaking this, he mingled some Freedoms, which left but little Room to hope that any thing could save her; yet thinking still to sooth him would be the most effectual Way, O Heavens! resumed she (*struggling with all her Force*) will you not then allow something to my Sex's Modesty? Time and Assiduity may make me yours, and spare you the Guilt of Force. — He would not suffer her to proceed, but renewing his Pressures, To wait a slow Consent, said he, would little suit the Violence of a Passion, such as I profess. The God of Love disdains all dull Delays: — Swiftly the zealous Votary rushes on his Wish, and baffles Opposition; cuts off, at once, Sighs, Tears, Entreaties, all the Repulses that stubborn Virtue or Affectation inspire in the relentless Fair, and proves the Deity, indeed, almighty. — Believe me, lovely Maid, the whining Wretch who sues at slavish Distance, dies at your Feet, nor dares aspire to seize what Passion aims at, is but in Shew a Lover, the Flame he boasts enervate, weak, and spiritless, like his Attacks; but I by Deeds shall testify how much — How much thou art a Villain (*cried Idalia, transported at once with Horror, Shame and Rage*) thou Monster! thou brutal Ravisher! But since thou hast lost all Regard due to thy own Honour, and my Birth and Fame, die (*continued she, snatching a Dagger, which, his upper Garment flying open in the Struggle, just then discovered itself*) die by her Hand whom thou so basely dost attempt to wrong. It was as much as he could do, by leaping lightly from her, to ward the Blow her Indignation had designed. It would have been easy for him to have wrested it from her afterwards;

wards; but she perceiving his Intent, turned the Point to her own Breast, and invoking all the Saints and Angels to be Witnesses of her Vow, swore she would strike it through her Heart the Moment he attempted to disarm her. *No, barbarous Man* (pursued she) *what-ever mistaken Notions the Levity and fond Belief of some of our weak Sex may have inspired thee with; thou now shalt find there's one among us who dares meet Death to fly Dishonour.*— *Since deaf to all the Considerations of my noble Family, and Bernardo's Power, behold and tremble at my Virtue's Bravery.*— *Blest now with Means to escape thy vile Design, I can no longer fear thee, nor need debase my just Disdain so far as to intreat thee.* The Fire which now darted from her Eyes, the assured Accent of her Voice, and the resolute Air of all her Motions, sufficiently declared she would make no Scruple of fulfilling the Protestation she had made. Don Ferdinand was too sensibly alarmed at it, to put it to the Venture, but immediately formed a Stratagem which seemed more likely to succeed: Making use, therefore, of that Dissimulation which those who study the undoing Art are so well versed in, he dressed his Eyes and Face in Looks far different from those they lately wore; an humble Admiration now seemed to take up all his Thoughts, and aw'd Desire seemed fearful to appear: He prostrated himself before her, acknowledged the Temerity of his Attempt, conjured her either to forgive him, or plunge the Dagger where she first designed it, swore he would not live in her Displeasure; and accompanied all he said with so many Sighs, and such well-counterfeited Contrition, that either her Vanity (which often inclines Women too readily to pardon those Faults which they imagine caused by the Force of their own Charms, and the Violence of the Lover's Passion) her good Nature, or perhaps a secret Liking of his Person, made it impossible for her to deny what he so earnestly entreated. The Grant, however, was not without Limitation; she forgave all he had done, but on Con-
dition

dition he never should repeat it, and that he would not oppose her immediate Return to her Father's House. *Far be it from my Thoughts*, replied the artful Ferdinand; *this Moment would I deny my fond gazing Eyes the Joy of looking on you, had I not yet one Request to make, which, if refused, I have no more to do but die. What is it?* said Idalia. After having obtained a Pardon for your injurious Design upon my Honour, it must be something beyond what I can comprehend that I should think difficult to grant. Love ever is accompanied with Fears, resumed he; and that it is something relating to that, the Terrors I am in to ask it, may inform you. Let me conjure you, then, by all that heavenly Softness in your Disposition, to tell me, and tell me truly (for fain would I flatter my ambitious Wishes with a Hope my Services, in time, might move you) if I can gain your noble Father's Leave to make my humble Application, will you consent to hear me? Is not there something in my Form or Manner, which will repel the soft Efforts of Love? — O speak! (continued he, perceiving she was silent) I dread the Certainty, yet am unable to endure the Tortures of Suspence — I know not, answered she, blushing, if it be consistent with a Virgin's Modesty, to answer a Demand like this, but something sure must be allowed to the Quality and Merits of Don Ferdinand; nor will my Sex condemn my easy Nature, when to such exalted Accomplishments I throw off Affectation, and confess I shall, with Pride and Pleasure, listen to the Vows my Father shall command me to receive from you.

THOUGH nothing could be more distant from the Soul of Don Ferdinand than the Design of soliciting Bernardo on any such Account, yet the feigning it was of infinite Service to gain Time, which was all he wanted. Examining the Hours, they found the Night was so far spent, that Idalia was at her Wit's End to think what Excuse she should make for her long Absence. Ferdinand taking the Advantage of her Fear, Madam, said he, though I much doubt all I can say, after the Presumption I have been guilty of,

will

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will be suspected, I would advise you not to go home till Morning : You will have Time enough by then to think of something plausible to allay your Father's Concern; ---- or you may go early to some Lady of your Acquaintance, and engage her to pretend you have been with her all Night. ---- Till then, this House is at your Devotion; you shall be served in all you command; and, to prevent your Fears of my relapsing into my late Error, I will myself go out of it. What cannot an artful Dissimulation engage one to ? *Idalia* believed him now so entirely her Convert, that what he counselled did not in the least alarm her; and the good Opinion she now had of him, and the Uncertainty in what Manner she could excuse herself at home, made her willing to accept it. She had a little Shock, however, at lying at a House, which, by the Liberties *Don Ferdinand* had taken in it, she could not imagine to be held by People of Honour; but the seeming penitent Lover removing that Scruple by assuring her that they were so much at his Devotion, that as soon as they saw there was an Alteration in his Humour, theirs would immediately acquiesce, she at last consented to remain there till Morning; but told him, she expected the Performance of his Promise of going away himself. *Madam* (answered he) *not all the Reluctance I feel in myself at quitting the Roof where all my Hopes are treasured, shall oblige me to disobey you. I go this Moment; and that no needless Fears may disturb the Repose I wish you, I entreat you will see me from the Door, and take with you the Key, which alone could be the Passport to admit me here again.* *Idalia* was so well pleased with the Care he expressed of her Quiet, that she again, at his Entreaty, confirmed the Pardon she had already granted, and took Leave of him, with a Countenance which testified her Words were no way contradictory to her Heart.

AFTER his Departure, having taken the Key, as he desired her to do, into her Possession, she suffered herself to be conducted by the People of the House into
a Chama-

a Chamber, and was not long before she went to Bed : But it was impossible for Sleep to have any Power over her ; Imagination was too busy to suffer the dull God's Approach ; the Pleasure she took in being admired was too much rooted in her Nature, for the late Danger it had brought her into, to erase ; and the Joy of having an Adorer, such as *Don Ferdinand*, made full Amends for the Frights some Part of his Behaviour had put her in. From this Contemplation, which afforded her only *Delight*, she fell into one altogether as *vexatious*, which was the Neglect that *Florez* had treated her with, in not coming to the Place he had appointed her to be at ; and if she could have believed it possible for any Man, who had seen her, to *resign* her to a Rival, she would not have been a Stranger to the Truth ; for she, as well as all who had Acquaintance with him, was sensible of the Obligations he had to *Ferdinand*. But this was the last Reason she could form ; it was not without the greatest Difficulty in the World she could bring herself to any Notion of it, and perhaps should have found out some other Motive for his Behaviour, less disagreeable to her to believe, if her Cogitations had not met with an Interruption she was far from thinking of.

SHE had looked on herself as safe where she now was, as in her *Father's* House, through the double Security of her *Lover's* Conversion, and having the Key of the Door : But, alas ! she too soon discover'd her Mistake. She had not been an Hour in Bed, before she felt the Clothes thrown off, and something catch fast hold of her. The Voice and Actions of the Person told her it was no other than *Don Ferdinand*, as did his own Behaviour and Confession afterward, that the Story of his Repentance was but forg'd, the easier to betray her, and the Delivery of the Key only an Artifice to engage her Trust, there being a Back-Door to the House, by which he immediately enter'd, and came into the Chamber through a Closet, which had a Passage into another Room.

WHAT

Part I. *The Unfortunate Mistress.* 21

WHAT was now the Distraction of this unhappy Lady, waked from her Dream of Vanity to certain Ruin! unavoidable Destruction! She raved, she tore, did all that Women could; but all in vain! --- In the midst of Shrieks and Tremblings, Cries, Curses, Swoonings, the impatient *Ferdinand* perpetrated his Intent, and finished her Undoing.

IN the mean time, the careful *Father* had been in all the Anxiety imaginable: He had sent to every place where he had Hope to find her, in search of his darling Daughter; till at last, all his Endeavours being vain, and the lateness of the Night not bringing her, assured him she could not be detained by any Occasion which could merit his Approbation, he flew to her Chamber, broke open her Cabinet, believing there might be a Probability of some Discovery; and finding there the Letters she had received from *Flores*, and, amongst the rest, that last fatal one which mentioned the Place of Assignment, he concluded her lost; that either she had disposed of herself to some unworthy Match, or had been deluded into a much worse Inconvenience. He could do nothing till Morning, either for his Satisfaction or Revenge; and all who have known the Grief of a beloved Child's Undoing, will easily guess at his. At Break of Day he sent to the Officers of Justice for a *Mission* to search that House, and produced the Paper which had occasioned his requiring it. It was immediately granted; and he had soon been informed of the whole Transaction, had not the strangest Accident that ever was, screened the injurious Contrivers of it for some Time from the Punishments their Crime was worthy of.

DON *Ferdinand* was endeavouring, by all the Persuasions he was Master of, to bring the ruined Fair to an Opinion she was not so unhappy as she thought herself: but all that he could say was ineffectual to give a Moment's Cessation to the Tempest of her Fury: Had any Means of Death been in her Power, she would certainly not have out-lived the Loss of Honour;

Honour; but as he had taken care of that, all she could do, was to lament it. As they were thus employed, a loud Knocking at the Chamber-Door obliged the surprized Lover to quit his Bed, and see what had occasioned it. It was *Florez*, who happening to pass by *Don Bernardo's* Door, had seen a great Crowd about it; and enquiring the Reason, was told, They were going in search of the young Lady of that House, who, 'twas thought, had been conveyed away by a Gentleman who pretended to court her. — This News was sufficient to alarm the guilty Soul of him 'twas told to; and not doubting, but every thing was discovered, had hastened to *Ferdinand* to apprise him of it. — *Without doubt*, said he, *my Lord, the whole Secret is betrayed, and I, and the People of this House must be inevitably ruined, as Abettors of the Fact, unless your Interest with the Doge is strong enough to protect us. My Interest with my Uncle*, replied the other, very much perplexed, *I fear will be too weak even to obtain a Pardon for myself in an Affair like this: — Bernardo is a Senator, and highly esteemed both by the Court and Populace: — I know not what to think on it. —* He stood for a Moment or two after he had spoke this in a Pause; and that gave *Idalia* (who, by the Coming of *Florez*, and the Advertisement he brought, knew it was to his Deceit she owed her Ruin) Liberty to vent some Part of her just Rage in Curses and Reproaches. Neither of them in that Confusion seemed to take much Notice of what she said; but *Don Ferdinand* starting from his Musing, and catching up his Clothes, and putting them on as fast as he could, 'Tis now no Time, said he, *to answer idle Railing, we must prepare for our common Safety.* As soon as he had spoke these Words, he called for the Woman of the House, who presently came up, frightened almost to Death with the Account she had received from *Florez*, and ordered her to dress *Idalia* with all the Expedition imaginable, bidding her not to be concerned, for he had bethought him of a Way to retrieve all. But all that he, or she, or

Florez

Florez could do, was not to any Purpose to persuade *Idalia* to rise: She seemed, in the midst of her Anguish, to exult with Hope of Vengeance, and swore she would continue in the very Place and Posture she was in; and, by proclaiming her Wrongs, and the Authors of them, put it past the Power of all their Artifice to escape the Punishment they feared. But, alas! her Resolution stood her but in little stead on this Occasion, the imminent Danger they were in made them dispense with Ceremony, and she was taken out of Bed by Force, and her Clothes, in what Manner they could, huddled on. As soon as she was made ready, he caught her in his Arms, and carried her down Stairs, bidding *Florez* look that nothing was left in the Chamber which might discover who had been there. The House that joined to that in which they were, belonged to a young Gentleman whose Name was *Henriquez de Valago*, an intimate Friend and Companion of *Ferdinand's*: Thither did he carry the disconsolate *Idalia*, intreating him to be careful that her Despair acted nothing against her Life; and that he would conceal her from the View of all his Servants, and at Night convey her to *Padua*, to a Seat he knew he had in that City. *Henriquez* having faithfully promised to obey him in all these Injunctions, he left him, and returned to *Florez* and the Landlady: The latter he bad be of good Comfort, there could be no Proof against her; and all she had to do, was to be resolute in her Denials; for which, he told her, he would not fail to recompense her. Having given this necessary Order, he went away with *Florez* at the Back-door the very Moment that *Bernardo*, and those he brought, were commanding the other to be opened. The Woman, according to Directions, immediately obeyed, and so well counterfeited a Surprise at the Demands they made, that a Person less interested than Don *Bernardo* would have believed her innocent; but the Letter was to him an Evidence substantial; and though in searching all the Rooms, examining the Servants, and taking all

all the Care usual on such Occasions, there seemed not the least Ground to imagine she, or any other Persons, beside the Family, had been there, he was obliged to go away more *unsatisfied*, because he wanted Proof, but as much *assured* as before, that this was the fatal Place which had deprived him of his Daughter.

Ferdinand, accompanied by *Florez*, went directly to his own Apartment; where having passed some Time in Consultation in what Manner it was best to proceed, at last it was concluded, that the latter should remain there concealed, till they should find out by what means the Discovery had been made; and it being the Custom of the former every Morning to attend the *Doge*, he new dressed him, and at the usual Hour went to the Palace, which he found crowded by a great Number of the Nobility and Senators, who, he was informed by some of them, were summoned by the *Doge* on an Affair relating to *Don Bernardo*. It is easy to believe his Thoughts were not a little perplexed, to find the Affair had made so great a Noise; but veiling his Confusion as much as possible, he mingled with the Company that were going into the Room where his Uncle expected to receive them. The Morning Salutations were scarce over, when the unhappy *Bernardo* entered, and made his Complaint with so moving an Air, that few that heard him, but pitied his Misfortune. The *Doge* entreated him to be of Comfort, assured him, that nothing in the Compass of his Power should be wanting for his Redress; and that, if by any Means the Person who had injured him could be detected, the Offender, though found in the nearest and most dear Relation of his own, should not be protected from the severest Punishment the Law or his Revenge required. The mournful Father made his Compliment for these Assurances in as handsome a Manner as his Grief would give him leave; and having finished it, proceeded to relate all the Circumstances he knew of his Misfortune, which was the finding of the Letters,

ters, one of which had so punctually nominated *that House* for the Place she was to come to; but that having been searched, and nothing of Proof to be made that she had been there, it was not impossible but some Person, to confound their Examination, might have writ it on Purpose. All that remained was to endeavour to discover by whom these Letters were writ, for there was no Name to any of them (*Idalia* having forbid it, that her Correspondence with *Florez* might not by any Accident be found out) *Bernardo* produced them to the View of the whole Assembly, and the *Doge* earnestly adjured all present, that if they could in the least guess by the Stile or Character who was the Author, they would immediately declare it: But every one affirmed himself entirely ignorant; and *Ferdinand* now hugged himself in a full Security that this first Brunt being past, nothing could hereafter prejudice him, or *Florez*, on the Account of *Idalia*: But the Solemnity with which he had heard his Uncle protest to *Don Bernardo*, that if the Person who had wronged him could by any Means be discovered, the strictest Severity of Justice should be his Portion, made him extremely cautious in what Manner he behaved. He forbore, therefore, to visit *Idalia* while she was concealed at the House of *Don Henriquez*, nor would for some Days after he knew she was carried to *Padua*, go there.

BUT while the Success of this Adventure afforded a good deal of satisfactory Matter of Conversation to those who were the Contrivers of it, whenever they were together, the miserable *Bernardo* passed his Hours in a Condition pitiable by all but those who had occasioned it: He refused to eat or drink, shut himself from all Society, and suffered not the Light of Heaven to enter at his mournful Windows. In vain his Friends, Relations, and Acquaintance, endeavoured to perswade him to assuage his Sorrows; — in vain the *Religious* of all Orders sent their daily Remonstrances, how unlawful it was to give Way to such Immoderate Grief! He was not to be moved; — he

was not to be comforted; — and it was looked on as almost a Miracle, that *Age*, so oppressed, sunk not beneath the Burden of an Anguish sufficient to have weighed down *Youth*.

BUT to return to *Idalia*: — Never Man had a Task more difficult, than *Henriquez* found in executing the Charge *Don Ferdinand* had given him. That wretched Lady was so bent on Death, that there required the utmost Caution to prevent the Mischief which her Fury threatened; a hundred Times, in that one Day she remained in his House, had she attempted on her Life; and when he had put her into a *Gondula*, which he had ordered to be made ready for that Purpose, he was obliged to hold her the whole Time of their little Voyage in his Arms, or the River *Brent* had been her Grave. O cruel, barbarous Man! said she, *why will you deny me the only Relief for Miseries like mine?—But think not to disappoint me always:—Not all the Powers of Heaven and Earth combined shall force me long to drag this Load of Infamy and Woe! I cannot, --- will not live! ---* With such like Speeches, which were still accompanied with tearing of her Hair, her Garments, and sometimes her very Flesh, did she express the bitter Anguish of her Soul, whenever he attempted to divert her Desperation: But how dangerous is it for a Heart young and amorous to entertain Compassion for a lovely Object! what a prevailing Force has Beauty in Distress! not all her Distraction, nor the wild Horror which sat on her Features, could take from them their Power of Charming.---The Fire of Indignation which sparkled in her Eyes abated not the wonted Sweetness,—the very Confusion of her Air had something graceful in it; and *Henriquez* too soon was sensible, that in the Design of serving *Ferdinand* he had undertaken an Office fatal to his own Repose. He struggled, however, with all the Force he was able, to withstand the first Emotions of his Passion, not only because of the Injustice such Sentiments would make him guilty of to a Friend who had entrusted him, but also that him-
self

Part I. *The Unfortunate Mistress.* 27

self was under Obligations of Constancy to a Lady who had preferred him to the whole World.

BUT, alas! What Ties, what Obligations, what Engagements are sufficient to bind the roving Heart of faithless Man? Untasted Pleasures still are thought the sweetest: *Donna Lawra* (for so was she called, the Memory of whose Charms this new Beauty was beginning to erase) had already been too bounteous of her Favours to make the almost fated *Henriquez* over solicitous of the Continuance of them: He had, however, more Gratitude than many of his Sex can boast, and, as I have already said, endeavoured for some Time very strenuously to repel the Assaults of any new Desires to her Prejudice; and it is not altogether impossible (though not exceeding probable, considering the Charms of *Idalia*, and the Inconstancy which is natural to Mankind) that his Efforts might not have been unsuccessful, had not herself contributed to her Undoing.

NEVER Woman was of a more haughty, jealous, and impatient Disposition, than this Lady; and having some Time before made *Henriquez* a Present of a little *Moorish* Page, with a Design to be a Spy on his Actions, was by him informed that his Master had ordered a *Gondula* to wait him about Sun-set at the *River Brent*; and that he had commanded his Servants not to discover to any Person after his Departure which Way he was gone. This was sufficient to alarm her with an Apprehension, that something must have occasioned this Secrecy; and the rather, because she had sent twice that Day to desire to speak with him, and he had both Times excused himself from coming, pretending Indisposition. She immediately, as jealous Women do, imagined the worst, was certain in her own Mind that a new Mistress had engaged him from her, and that it could be with no other he intended to leave *Venice*: She presently supposed it must be to *Padua* he was going; and not able to linger in the Torments of Suspence, resolved to be there before him; and that no Notice might be taken

of her Design, would not command her own *Gondula*, though she had a very fine one, to be prepared, but got into one of those common *Wherries* which generally wait to carry ordinary Passengers. She had frequently been at the House which Don *Henriquez* had at *Padua*, and the Servants that were in it perfectly knew her, and were not at all surpris'd to see her, especially when she told them that their Master would be there next Morning. But the Confusion with which *Henriquez* at his Arrival beheld her there, may more easily be imagined than described; therefore I shall only say it was such as could be surmounted by nothing but the Indignation of *Lawra*, when, by the Sight of *Idalia* with him, she had so much Reason to believe her Suspicions were too just: She flew on him with all the Reproaches that her Rage, and the Confirmation of her Jealousy, could suggest; to which he gave but little Answer, till after he had conducted his lovely *Charge* to a Chamber; and appointed a Servant to watch and attend her. At his Return to the Room where he had left *Lawra*, he endeavour'd to allay the Fury she was in, by telling her Part of the Truth: He assur'd her that it was not on his own Account that he had been at the Pains of bringing that Lady thither, but conceal'd the Name of the Person for whose Sake he had done it, being of that Opinion which most of his Sex have of the other, that there was but little Security for their Secrecy, and was sensible how dangerous for *Ferdinand* it would be, if by her Levity it should be revealed. But his evading to let her into the whole Affair, rendered her incapable of believing any Part of it: All that he could say seem'd but so many Excuses, and was ineffectual to alleviate her Passion. — She loaded him with Curses and Upbraidings, — swore never to see him more. — Nor could all his Entreaties prevail on her to continue a Moment longer in his House; but taking Advantage of the *Gondula* which had brought him and *Idalia*, left him, with a Vow never to rest till she had meditated a Revenge suitable to his Perfidiousness.

W H E N

Part I. *The Unfortunate Mistress.* 29

WHEN once a Woman has disposed of every thing in her Power to give, it must be Softness only, and fond Compliance with her Lover's Will, that can maintain her Empire o'er his Heart. — The Power which once this Lady had, was already shocked by the newer and more potent Charms of the incomparable *Idalia*; and the Violence of her impatient Jealousy bringing to his Remembrance a thousand Faults in her Humour, which in the *Noon* of Passion's Sun were hid, but now, in the *Wane* of his Affections, appeared in their worst Colours, she began not only to appear distasteful to his softer Sentiments, but also to seem justly so to those which Reason had the greatest Share in inspiring. — He knew not, however, to what Extremes her Indignation might transport her, and to prevent what she might contrive, thought it the best way to remove *Idalia*. He had a little *Villa* at *Vicenza*, about a Day's Journey from *Padua*, in the Road to *Verona*, one of the most pleasantly situated Places in all *Italy*, having its Foundation on a Hill, which afforded a Prospect of the whole Country round for many Miles. The Sweetness of the Air, and the Variety of rural Diversions she might find there, he hoped might have an Influence over her Melancholy, and in Time wear off the Bitterness of those agonizing Reflections which at present she was so full of.

HE delayed the Execution of this Design no longer than the next Day; and as nothing violent is ever of any long Continuance, through his Perswasions, and the Measures he made use of to effect it, the desperate Emotions which had raged with so much Fury in the Soul of *Idalia* began by little and little to abate; and the wonderful Respect and prodigious Tenderness with which she found herself treated by this new Adorer, by degrees entirely reconciled her to Life. He observed it with Joy; and being desirous to discover more, one Day, as they were sitting together, he entreated her to command him something where- by he might testify the sincere Esteem and Admira-

tion he professed to have for her. — He assured her there was nothing so difficult that he would not undertake for her sake; and to sound her Inclinations, begged she would have Confidence enough in him to acquaint him with what she would have done: — *Do not, Madam, said he, consider yourself as under any Restraint, while at Vicenza: Though nothing in the World can afford me a Joy adequate to that of gazing on you, yet if you are determined to return to your Father, myself shall conduct you to him, and endeavour to invent some Excuse which may shadow over the true Cause of your Absence: — Or if you can enough forgive the Faults of raging Passion, to yield to the Affections of Don Ferdinand, though to the eternal Ruin of my own ardent Wishes, at Padua you shall meet him; for doubtless he will soon be there to take you from me: — Or if there be any thing in this Place so agreeable to you, as to make you willing to bless me with your Residence in it, here remain safe both from your Father's Power, and the Sollicitations of all you would avoid.* This Offer appeared so generous, that Idalia was infinitely charmed with it; and after a little Pause, *I am so much obliged,* replied she, *to your Honour and good Nature, since I have been here, that it is not without the utmost Confusion I reflect on my Manner of treating you when I was first put in your Power. As you had no hand in my Undoing, I ought to have reserved my Reproaches for those who alone are worthy of them; — and to the rest of your Obligations I see you are willing to add that of pardoning what my Madness uttered: But,* continued she, *with an Air wholly composed of Sweetness, for this last Favour I know not with what Words to thank you: — There's something in it beyond the reach of Gratitude; — and 'tis in my Acceptance only that I can prove how truly I am touched with it. — To return to Venice I never can consent: My Reputation blasted, and ruined by my Father's hasty Zeal, in publishing this Adventure, I should become the Jest of every saucy Girl that envied me before: — My Spirit could not bear it. — No, first I'd turn a wretched Wanderer through*

through the pitiless World! — a Grave would now be preferable to my Father's House! — But as to Ferdinand! — the Villain! the Monster that has undone me! — Hell, Hell, is not so dreadful as the Thoughts of seeing him again! — Then, Madam, cried the transported *Henriquez*, interrupting her, may I hope you will continue here? For some Time, resumed she; if you grow not weary of so troublesome a Guest, I'll stay till I have disposed of myself either in a Monastery, or some other Place. It is easy to suppose with how much Rapture the enamoured *Henriquez* heard her speak these Words: There passed between them several Protestations of Love and Adoration on the one Side, and Esteem and Gratitude on the other; and at last entring into a Discourse what Method was most proper to make use of for the preserving her in that Liberty she desired, they both thought it best that he should leave her there, and return to *Padua* before the coming of *Ferdinand*; and missing him, should discover he had carried her to any other Place; and that at their first meeting, he should counterfeit the greatest Concern imaginable for not having been able to discharge the Trust reposed in him; and withal, dress up a Story of her having made her Escape by Night from his House. This being concluded on, he took Horse immediately for *Padua*, where had happened a Disturbance he little expected to hear of.

THE malicious *Laura*, doubly disappointed in her Love and Pride, meditated nothing but Revenge; and though she had never seen *Idalia* before she met at *Henriquez's* House, nor could be certain she was that Lady whose Elopement had made so great a Noise at *Venice*, yet it came into her Head to report it, not doubting but *Don Bernardo* would take such Measures to assure himself, as would infallibly expose her Rival. She thought, that if it were really *Idalia*, as there was nothing improbable but it should, the Father's just Indignation would not only be the Ruin of his Passion, by depriving him of her Sight forever, but also the eternal Destruction of his Fortune,

and perhaps his Life ; for there was not any thing too violent for her Rage to wish, inflicted on him : And that if it should happen to be any other Woman, the Discovery who she was, and the Opportunity it would give of blasting her Reputation, would be some little Satisfaction for the Loss of *Henriquez*. With this View she took a Pen, and employed it to Don Bernardo, in the Manner following :

TO DON BERNARDO.

TO receive an Injury, yet to be, by our Ignorance of the Person who offers it, deprived of the Means either of Vengeance or Redress, I look upon as a Vexation almost equal to what the Misfortune itself occasions ; and have too great a Sense of what a Father's Heart must feel in a Disappointment like yours, to withhold a Secret which may afford some sort of a Satisfaction to you.

THE fair Idalia, your unhappy Daughter, either too fatally ensnared by the Insinuations of the most vicious and perfidious of his Sex Don Henriquez de Velago, or betrayed to his Power by some Artifice yet more base, was lodged in his House, perhaps in his Bed, when you were vainly searching for her in another Place : But he, with Reason, fearing the amorous Theft unsafe to be long retained at Venice, has since carried her to Padua, where he now revels in her Ruin, and triumphs in Security.

'TWOULD be but impertinent to instruct you what to do ; your own Wisdom and paternal Care will need no Admonitions with what Expedition you should haste, I will not say to save, but to revenge a Daughter ; therefore will trouble you no farther than to entreat your Pardon for not setting any Name to this Advertisement, which is designed a friendly one, from

Your unknown Humble Servant.

A Reader of the most ordinary Capacity will easily imagine this Letter had the Effect on Don *Bernardo* it was writ for: He forgot his Age, and the Indisposition his late Grievs had thrown him in; he deferred going to *Padua* no longer a Time than the Necessity of getting those People who were to accompany him required: But this unhappy Gentleman had to his other Calamity this added, of being twice, as he believed, at the Point of detecting the Author of his Misfortune, and as often finding his Expectations disappointed; for the Servants of *Henriquez* were all of them too faithful to utter the least Syllable of what they knew; and *Bernardo* doubted not but he had been a second Time abused, and presently imagined the Person who had writ the other Letter to amuse his Search, had also been the Contriver of this.

BUT though there was nothing of *Idalia* to be heard, this Adventure was the Occasion of bringing to Light another Secret; which afterwards being blazed abroad, was Matter enough of discourse for the whole Town for a long Time. Having left *Henriquez's* House, with a Design never to trouble any other, without some more evident Demonstration that they were not imposed on, as they passed by a Vineyard adjoining to it, they happened to see a Country Fellow pruning the Vines; it came into the Head of some one of those who were with *Bernardo*, to enquire of him if he had not seen a Lady at his Master's. The Rustick's Simplicity gave hopes he would not deny the Truth, or if he did, it would be in such a Manner, as they might easily discover it; and indeed had a Secret been in his keeping, there was little Probability it would long continue so. He presently told them, a Lady had been there some few Days before; and, said he, it is rumoured here at *Padua*, that she is Don *Henriquez's* Mistress. — Some say that he is to marry her, but by the Mass I believe nothing of it; for chancing to be in the Grove behind the House, who did I see come in but these

two kissing and toying! They did not think I took any Notice.— I say no more; but if ever he is her Husband, I have lost my Aim — that's all.— These Words, which could not be imagined to be uttered with any other Design than what the Manner of them expressed, the Pleasure some People, especially of his Degree, take in speaking all they know, made poor *Bernardo* ready to sink into the Earth: He was now sure it was *Idalia* that the Fellow meant, and the Horror which seized his before half-broken Heart, was now so great, to hear this seeming Confirmation of the Dishonour of his Family and Ruin of his Child, that he had neither Voice or Spirit to ask more. But the others, being less interested in what they heard, had Presence of Mind enough to put many other Questions to him; among the rest, what Sort of a Woman she was who had been so familiar with *Don Henriquez*? if she was tall or short, black or fair? of what Age she appeared to be? and if he had ever seen her before, or knew of her having been at his Master's House any other Time than that he spoke of in the *Grotto*? To most of these Interrogatories the Fellow made such Replies as gave no Certainty whether it was the Lady they were in Search of or not; till to the last, that of how often she had been there? he told them, it had been her constant Custom to come and tarry two or three Nights at a Time, whenever *Henriquez* was at *Padua*, as long as he had been employed in working there; which had been above two Years. This Account did no Way agree with a Belief that it could be *Idalia*, who had never been one Night absent from her Father's House till that fatal one, in which he had begun his Search; which some of them saying, and chancing to mention her Name, — *Alas!* cried the Countryman, *you are mistaken, Gentlemen, I do not know any thing of the Woman you speak of: She I mean is called Donna Lawra de Savila, Widow of Don Jacques de Savila: I was once a Servant of her Husband's, and am as well acquainted with her Face as*
my

my own. There was not a Person in this Company but knew this Lady; but there was one among 'em whom these Words did more particularly influence: He had for a long Time had a Passion for her, and finding all the Endeavours he could make use of were in vain to engage any other Return than Disdain, his slighted Tendernefs (as it is common enough, especially among the *Italians*) was now converted to as violent an Aversion; and nothing on Earth could have been so agreeable to the Sentiments with which he now considered her, as this Account, which gave him so fair an Opportunity of affronting, and exposing her; which at their Return to *Venice* he took care to do, with such a witty Inveteracy, that the once haughty, gay, admired *Lawra*, saw herself in a little Time the Ridicule of all who knew her; and not able to endure the Disrespect of those Reflections which even her very Presence did not silence, and as little in a Capacity of revenging it, her Charms being almost past the Bloom, and her Wealth, by former Extravagancies very near exhausted, out of Humour with the World, and detesting all Mankind, she retired to a Relation's House which few resorted to, who had any Knowledge of her, and indulged her Discontent, that a Misfortune she designed another, had so justly fallen on herself.

BUT this happened not till after she had seen one Part of her indignant Wish fulfilled, the Death of *Henriquez*; which though not brought about by any Contrivance of her own, she looked upon as inflicted on him by the Justice of Providence, for his Ingratitude and Perfidiousness to her.

AT his Return to *Padua*, it is hard to say whether his Surprise to hear his House had been searched, or the Joy he conceived that the Danger of it was so well over, had the greatest Share in her Soul. But his Contentment was only of a short Continuance: Designing to go immediately to *Venice*, thinking it the more effectual Way to take off all Apprehensions of Don *Ferdinand's* ever expecting to find *Idalia*

with him, to go to him with the Story he had formed of her Escape, than to wait his coming to seek her at *Padua*. He was just preparing to set out, when he was told that Don Ferdinand was alighted at the Gate: He went to receive him with the Familiarity which the long Friendship that had been between them rendered the most obliging; but before he had Time to mention what he intended about *Idalia*, the other was beginning to make him a thousand Acknowledgments for the Care he had taken in preserving her for him. *To what an infinite Degree, dear Friend, said he, am I obliged to you for the Trouble you have had in securing for me a Happiness I must but for your Goodness have been utterly deprived of! All that I can say, will be too little to express the Gratitude I feel; — but be assured the Favour shall never die in my Remembrance; each Moment that blesses me with my lov'd Idalia's Sight, will also remind me it is to you I am indebted for the Rapture. — Alas! my Lord* (interrupted Henriquez, a little confounded at receiving Thanks for that which he was conscious to himself he was far from deserving) *I wish to Heaven it had been in my Power to have any way contributed to your Satisfaction; but all my Endeavours were in vain — I know what you would say* (cried Ferdinand, not suffering him to proceed) *I know the inexorable Fair has been deaf to all the Arguments you could urge in Favour of my Passion; but no matter, Time and Assiduity may work upon her, and my continued Tendernefs engage her yielding to that Joy the Violence of my burning Passion has yet but by Force obtained. — But haste, pursued he, my dear Henriquez! haste, and conduct me to her; — my throbbing Heart beats high with raging Love; — this tedious Absence which the Fear of being suspected, and by that Means losing her for ever, could only have occasioned, has made me almost wild with fierce Impatience! I burn, I bleed, I die to see her! — Can it be possible, resumed Henriquez coldly, this mighty Longing, this ardent Wishing for one whose*
Charms

Charms already you have ris'd ; can the Desire of Beauty enjoyed and known, afford such eager Transports ! — It is strange, indeed, replied Ferdinand ; but would not seem so, could you have any Notion how much beyond her Sex Idalia is ! — how charming, even in the midst of Rage and Grief ! — Her very Frowns have more Attractions in them than the most melting Softness of any other Woman ! I am sorry for it, said Henriquez, and if Wishes could avail, would willingly lose Part of my Blood, she seem'd less worthy your Esteem.

THE Surprise of the enamoured Ferdinand at these Words can hardly be represented, much less the Rage with which he listened to that Story the other had prepared to deceive him into a Belief of her Flight. There is nothing in the World more difficult than to conceal Love from him who is a Lover, but much more so, when the same Object enflames them both: Besides, there are so many little Hesitations in the telling an Untruth, especially with those who do not usually practise it, that a nice Observer may easily discern the Difference. Don Ferdinand was too passionate an Admirer of *Idalia's* Perfections, not to believe it highly probable another might think of her as he did; and, by the Force he had made use of to gratify his Desires, one might know he was not so great a Bigot to the Rules of Honour, as to imagine they had Power to restrain his Appetite. He forbore, however, to interrupt the other while he was speaking; but as he found him silent, he broke out into all the Exclamations the Falshood he believed himself treated with deserved. Henriquez, willing to preserve his Friendship, but resolute not to forego *Idalia*, made a thousand Imprecations to aver the Truth of what he said, but to no Purpose; and had it really happened as Henriquez pretended, 'tis probable he would have found it a hard Matter to have gained Credit from this impatient Lover. Fierce and tempestuous in his Nature when any thing displeased him, he let him know he saw through, and disdained the feeble Arts with which he went about to impose on him, and

bid

bid him once for all bring forth *Idalia*, or answer his Demand with his Sword. *Henriquez* would very fain have evaded either, but finding himself pressed past Refusal, and absolutely bent not to comply with the *former*, he was obliged to do so to the *latter*, or prove himself a Coward. The Place agreed on for the Decision of this fatal Controversy, was a Field adjoining to *Henriquez's* House; and *Ferdinand* going there before, to avoid Suspicion of their Quarrel, the other promised to follow him immediately.

IT was not without the greatest Concern that *Henriquez* found himself involved in this unhappy Necessity, either to be miserable for ever in the Loss of *Idalia*, or become the Enemy of a Person whom he had long considered as the most intimate of his Friends, and one in whose Power it was to do him many ill Offices with the *Doge*, on whom he, as well as the other, had a Dependance. But what Considerations are of Force against Love? After two or three Moments Reflection, he sat him down, and writ a Letter, which he gave to a trusty Servant, ordering him to carry it with all Secrecy and Speed to his *Ville* at *Vicenza*, and deliver it to *Idalia*; and then immediately went to the Field, where the enraged *Ferdinand* impatiently expected him.

A FEW Words, much to the same Purpose as those they had entertained each other with in the House, having past between them, the new-made Enemies drew their Swords, and running against each other with greater Force than Art, each more aiming to reach his Rival's Life than defend his own, both had their With; the unfortunate *Henriquez* lost his at the first Push, and his Antagonist having received his Death's Wound, though yet ignorant of it, seeing him fall, was about to make his Escape, when, on a sudden, he found himself unable, and that he should soon lose both the Triumph of having overcome his Foe, and the Danger of the Punishment the Law inflicts on Duellists. He survived not the other above half an Hour, as the Chirurgeons, who afterwards examined

amined the Bodies, imagined; and the untimely Death of these two unhappy Gentlemen gave *Idalia* the first Proof, that her Beauty, like a fatal Comet, was destructive to all on whom it had any Influence, and seemed given her in so extraordinary a Proportion, only to make her Misfortunes more conspicuous.

SHE, who little dreamed of this fatal Catastrophe, was, in the mean Time, entertaining herself with *Ideas* of a far different Nature: Had she been less conscious of her own Excellencies, she could not have been blind to the Admiration which every Word and Action testified Don *Henriquez* had of them. She saw plainly that he loved her, and loved her with a Passion which was not to be accounted less violent, because it was more respectful than that of Don *Ferdinand*: Her Pride, however, would certainly have performed the latter, because of his superior Quality, could she have entertained the least Hope, that after what had happened he would marry her. But young and vain as she was, she flattered not herself with such a Hope; and for that Reason, as well as for the Violence he had used her with, he was the Object of her extremest Detestation. But as for *Henriquez*, she began to consider, that if his Designs were honourable, as he had never given her any Cause to suspect they were not, she might, by becoming his Wife, take off the Odium, which, by her being gone from her Father's House, had been cast on her Reputation. And this appeared so laudable a Wish, that she thought it would be an Indiscretion greater than any she had yet been guilty of, should she refuse it. She thought of nothing therefore but the Manner in which she should consent, which she doubted not but he would ask at his next coming to *Vicenza*.

I DOUBT not but the Reader will be pretty much surpris'd to find she could so easily be brought from one Extreme to another; and that she, who but a few Days before, was all Despair and Rage, was already grown so temperate and calm: But there was a happy Instability in this Lady's Nature, which prevented

vented her from regretting any thing for a long Time together; and it was this Disposition which carried her through a Sea of innumerable Troubles, each of which would have been sufficient to have overwhelmed another Woman. The Treachery with which her Confidence had been abused by *Florez*, the irreparable Injury her Virtue had received from the brutal Passion of *Ferdinand*, and the Grief which she was sensible the Loss of her was to her afflicted *Father*, were now no more remembred, or considered only as Vexations which the gaining a Husband so meritorious as *Henriquez* would amply compensate.

IN Contemplations therefore, not displeasing, did she pass her Time; till about the third Day after the Departure of *Henriquez*, one of the Servants whom he had left to attend her, came running hastily into the Room where she was, and told her, That Don *Myrtano*, Brother to his Master, desired to speak with her. She could have no Apprehensions of the true Reason of this Visit, and imagining only that some Accident having detained *Henriquez* longer than he designed, he had commissioned him to tell her of it, went to receive him without any Concern, or boding of the Miseries which this fatal Interview drew on her.

AFTER the first Civilities were over, *Madam*, said he, *I have a Letter for you, which you ought to have received before; but the same unhappy Accident which delayed the bringing it, has also been the Cause of my breaking it open; a Rudeness, I confess, which nothing but the Occasion could excuse.* In speaking these Words, he delivered a Paper to her, which was the same that *Henriquez* had writ to her the Moment before he fought with *Ferdinand*. The melancholy Air of his Deportment, and the Sighs which accompanied his Expressions, gave her sufficient Reason to believe there was something extraordinary to be told her: But she suspended the lesser Curiosity, to satisfy the greater, of knowing what this Letter contained; which opening hastily, she found in it these Lines:

To.

To the Incomparable IDALIA.

IF any thing were wanting to make my Charmer sensible of the Wonders of her Power, and the Effects it has wrought on me, what I am now about to acquaint her with, would be a Proof.

DON Ferdinand, either suspecting the Artifice which my Passion inspired me to deceive him with, or resenting the little Care I seemed to have of the Trust he reposed in me, demands my Life for the Expiation of my Crime. I go this Moment to answer the Call of his Revenge. I cannot blame him; the Man who aims at so inestimable a Treasure as your Love, should, for that Blessing, quit all meaner Considerations; and in that View only it is, that I shall dare to maintain the Falsity I have told him, though at the Expence of my last Drop of Blood. But, as I am ignorant how, in this fatal Contest, Fate may deal with me, I snatch this Opportunity of pouring out a Million of soft, tender Wishes, while I give you this Assurance, that whatever is decreed for my Body, you wholly govern my immortal Part; the Sword of Ferdinand may pierce my Heart, but not erase the bright Idea that my Soul is full of: When I am Ashes, the Passion you have inspired will have a Being; and living or dying I shall still continue

Your Adorer,

HENRIQUEZ DE VELAGO.

IDALIA was too much interested in the Life of Don Henriquez, not to be impatient to hear the Issue of this Quarrel mentioned in the Letter; which being informed of by his Brother, she swooned away, overcome with Grief and Wonder. Don Myrtano was not idle in applying proper Means for her Recovery; which when he had effected, he began to entertain her in a very different Manner than what she could

could have expected from so near a Relation to the Man who owned his Death to her malevolent Beauty : He was all Complaisance, all Gallantry, and seemed so little astonished at what his Brother had done, that he assured her he should think a Death so caused more glorious than the longest Life, which gave not a Proof of being sensible of her Charms. This was indeed the Way to dissipate her Sorrows ; but as she wanted no Wit nor Discernment, tho' her Vanity too often blinded her Judgment, she could not help thinking it a little odd that he should come there to visit her, and bring a Letter which he confessed he had taken the Liberty to open ; and letting fall some Words which testified as much, he gave her to understand his Reasons for it, in this Manner : *I see, Madam, said he, that you are not more surpris'd at the Contents of this Letter, than that I am the Bearer of it ; and because I should think it a Sin unpardonable to Heaven to oppose the Will of its most perfect Resemblance, the divine Idalia, I shall endeavour to satisfy her, as far as is in my Power, of every Particular of this unfortunate Adventure. Happening to be walking with your Father Don Bernardo on the Parade, the very Morning that he received a Letter from an unknown Hand, which gave him an Account of my Brother being blessed with your Society, he desired me, with the most earnest Conjurations, to inform him what I knew of the Affair ; to which I answered, as well I might, that I was so far from being let into any such Secret, that I verily believed it a Falsity ; and when he spoke of coming to Padua in search of you, I offered to accompany him ; which I had done, if not prevented by some Business which I could not put off. At his Return he sent for me, and seemed concerned that he had been guilty of wronging my Brother, and entreated me to make this Apology when next I saw him ; which I told him would be in a short Time, and accordingly took Horse for Padua immediately. I alighted there at the very Moment that the Bodies of the two unhappy Rivals were brought in. The Consolation I was in, to see this dreadful*

Issue

Issue of a Friendship which promised a far different Consequence, can hardly be expressed: I stood for some Time without the Power of Speech, or Motion, and perhaps had not recovered myself so soon, if a Servant, whom I knew to be the most favoured one my Brother kept, had not roused me from my Lethargy of Thought, by giving me a Paper, which he told me was writ by his Master, and put into his Hand, with a strict Charge to be delivered to a Lady at Vicenza. I was just about to carry it, said he, but am glad I made no greater Haste, since the Contents may possibly inform you the Reasons of this fatal Quarrel. In that Perplexity of Mind, I lost Decorum, and breaking the Seal, soon found the Fellow's Conjecture but too true, — that it was to Love I owed the Misfortune of my Brother's Death: Wonder not then, adorable Idalia (continued he, softening his Voice) that I was fired with Impatience to behold a Beauty, whose Charms had given such a Proof of their prodigious Influence! — I come (cried he, growing more tender) to satisfy a Curiosity which, I fear, will cost me dear. There was something so very graceful and engaging in the Air and Address of this young Gentleman, that it was almost impossible to see or hear him, without confessing a Sensibility of Perfections which very few, if any, could equal. Idalia, who had a Soul too capable of soft Impressions, full of warm Desires, and tender Languishments, though yet unfixed, gazed on him with a Pleasure which as yet she knew not the Meaning of. — That Life and Gaiety which once had made her relish the Conversation of Florez, — that noble Mein and excellent Behaviour which had engaged her Attention to the first Vows of Ferdinand, — and that submissive Tenderness which pleased her in the Addresses of Henriquez, and a thousand other different nameless Graces, which seemed united in the lovely Myrtano, inspired her, at the first Sight of him, with a Passion which she had neither Strength to repel, nor Artifice to conceal. — She now found in good earnest what it was to love, and felt in Reality those Emotions, which before she fancied
to

to have done. He, who was perfectly acquainted with the Sex, and no Stranger to the Charms he had for them, immediately read it in her Eyes, and resolved to make his Advantage of it, in favour of those Desires, which few that saw *Idalia* but were possessed with.

HE staid not long at the *Villa*, after having entreated her to remain there his Guest, as she had been his Brother's, and to command every thing in it with the same Freedom as she would do at Don *Bernardo's*; the necessary Preparations for the Funeral of *Henriquez*, whose Heir he was, obliging him to return to *Padua* with all Expedition. But the short Time he had been there, was sufficient to inspire the unhappy *Idalia* with such Sentiments as severely revenged the Destruction of his Brother.

THE Infancy of Love is generally the most pleasing Part of it, when new Desires play round the innocent Heart, and gentle Thrillings warm the throbbing Veins, the tender Passion by swift, but unperceived Degrees stealing through all the Seats of Life, affords only gay Wishes, pleasing Dreams, and rapturous Images of Joys to come; but in another Manner did it enter the Soul of this unquiet Fair: — She no sooner found herself alone, than giving way to her impatient Passion, a thousand widely different Thoughts, all wild and stormy as a troubled Sea, o'erwhelmed Reflection, and made Reason giddy: — She was presently sensible that she loved, and loved to that prodigious Height, that the least Appearance of an Obstacle to what she wished, was worse than Death: Her ruined Honour, and her blackened Fame seemed now Misfortunes more terrible by far than ever they had done before. *Oh! it is impossible* (cried she to herself) *that Myrtano, the lovely the accomplished Myrtano, can ever think the undone Idalia an Object worthy of his serious Affections!* — No, it was all Gallantry! — all unmeaning Flattery which dictated the tender Words he spoke! — His Heart despises the Indiscretion of my Conduct! — Pity is the most tender

Sen-

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Sentiment he can regard me with! ---- And, oh! how distant is that from what I would inspire! A Stream of Tears succeeded these Expressions: But this Passion having a little vented it self, the natural Vanity of her Disposition returned to give her Consolation; and in this Humour she would say, Yet why should I despair? — I am, perhaps, the only Person that judges with so much Severity of my Actions: Henriquez found enough in me to counterbalance all that my Mismanagement has brought upon me, and why may I not hope his Brother may be of his Opinion? — My Eyes are still the same, and every Charm which used to attract, maintains its Lustre with unfeigned Brightness: — The Man to whom I owed my Shame, has with his Life repaired the Injury he did me, — nor is my Birth unworthy of Myrtano. With such kind of Sentiments would she a while beguile Despair; but then the excessive Eagerness with which she wished to appear amiable in the Eyes of this Charmer of her Soul, suggested another Difficulty which she knew not how to get over. — Fool that I am (resumed she) and too liable to entertain the vain Delusions of fictitious Hope: — 'Tis not in Nature, — 'tis not in Reason, to expect the Man whose Brother I have killed, should love me. — The noble Henriquez, but for me, might have lived long and happily; — for my cursed Sake he died, and Myrtano is bound to hate me; --- should he forgive it, the Ghost of that unhappy Youth would rise to blast us in the midst of Rapture! ---- O Torture! Horror! Hell! --- it cannot, -- must not be, --- both Heaven and Earth forbid it! --- Henriquez cannot be recalled, and Myrtano must not love.

IN Agonies not to be expressed, not to be conceived but by the Heart that felt them, did this half-distracted Lady pass the Night after the Departure of Myrtano; but the Morning brought her a Comforter beyond her Hopes: She was scarce risen from the Bed, which the Confusion of her Thoughts had made most restless, when she received a Letter, which opening with a Mixture of Delight and Pain,

as believing it came from him who now had the sole Power of bestowing either, she read these Lines :

To the never-enough-admired
IDALIA.

IT is not the bleeding Body of my only Brother, yet uninterred, it is not the Apprehensions how, at so unfit a Season, you may condemn my rash Proceeding, can deter me from making a Declaration as suitable to your Beauty, as it is the contrary to my present Circumstance : But you were created only to work Wonders, and in the midst of Death and Horror disclose an opening Heaven, whose Brightness will suffer no other Ideas but itself to appear in the Remembrance.

THE Curiosity which Yesterday brought me to Vicenza, has involved me in a Passion which must render me either the most blest, or the most wretched of Mankind. Who loves Idalia can have no Medium in his Fate ; what then must be the Terrors of Suspence in an Affair on which depends far more than Life ? Ease them, I conjure you, most adorable Idalia ! and either send me to the Grave with my unhappy Brother, or permit me to live in the felicitous Hope of being one Day

Yours,

MYRTANO DE VELAGO.

P. S. Whether you pardon or condemn the Presumption of this, let a Line inform me : If the former, expect me to return Thanks at your Feet, as soon as the Obsequies of my Brother are performed ; if the latter, to hear I am no more.

WITH what Transports of unbounded Joy she read these Words, let those be Judge who love like her : A thousand, thousand times she kissed the
dear,

dear, the welcome Mandate; then put it to her Heart, repeating to herself the ravishing Contents;— then snatched it out again, as loth to lose the Sight of what had given her so infinite a Satisfaction, that scarce the Author of it, had he been present, could have added to it: The Extacy so filled her Soul, that she thought not of answering it, till a Servant informed her the Messenger, who brought it, waited to be dispatched. He shall not long (*cry'd she, starting as it were from some delightful Dream*) and immediately running to a Table whereon stood a Standish, made him this Reply:

TO DON MYRTANO.

IN what Manner can a Person so much obliged receive an Overture of Love, without appearing guilty either of an Indecorum to herself, or Ingratitude to you? If I accept too readily of the Heart you offer, how shall I answer it to the Modesty of my Sex? And if I reject it, what Way is left for me to repay the many Favours I am indebted for?— Severe Necessity! that whichsoever Path I tread, it leads to Condemnation;— yet such is the Cruelty of my Fate! I therefore will choose neither, but remain unbiassed till Time, and a more perfect Acquaintance with your Humour, shall inform me what will best become Bernardo's Daughter.

IDALIA.

P. S. While I am a welcome Guest at Vicenza, I shall expect you to tell me so, as frequently as you can.

It was with all the Difficulty in the World she restrained herself from writing with more Tenderneſs, and when she read over what she was about to send, it appeared so cold, and so far unlike the sincere Dictates of her Wishes, that she could not forbear adding a Postscript, for fear he should imagine her, indeed
al-

altogether insensible of his Merit, and give over the hopeless Prosecution; nor was she reconciled to what she had done till the next Morning, much about the same Hour she had received the former, she was agreeably disturbed from her Sleep by a second Billet; the Contents of which were these:

To the Adorable IDALIA.

THE Sight of your dear Hand gave me a Joy too exquisite to be allayed, even by the cold Reluctance with which you seem to treat a Passion the sincerest that ever Man professed, or Woman welcomed. — Methinks there should need no more to convince you of the Power of your triumphant Charms, than two such Victims as Ferdinand and Henriquez; and whenever you doubt my Truth, it cannot be that you call in question your own Beauty, but my Incapacity of distinguishing it: — But Time (as you are pleased to say) as it will convince you, so I hope will also move you to compassionate what is felt by

Your most Faithful Slave,

MIRTANO DE VELAGO.

P. S. The Body of the unfortunate Henriquez is this Night to be repositied in the Tomb of his Ancestors, and I hope To-Morrow's Evening will bring me to Vicenza. — Prepare, if possible, to receive me with a Smile, lest I envy the Condition of him I leave behind me, and regret a Life made miserable by your Displeasure.

THERE was not abundance of Occasion for this Pressure in the Postscript; the enamoured Idalia would have found it a difficult Task to have dressed her Face in Frowns whenever he appeared, had she never so much endeavoured it; and she was so much an Enemy to disguising her Sentiments, that he might easily read

read them in the Answer which she returned, It was in this Manner :

TO DON MYRTANO.

IF I were not willing to harbour a Thought so entirely disagreeable to my own Desires, I should imagine there was more of Raillery than Sincerity in the Declaration your first Letter made me. I am not so little conscious of my own Demerits, as to believe myself capable of inspiring a Passion such as you describe ; — but I shall make Allowances for that : I am sensible you Men of Wit know how to magnify, — and if I have not the better Opinion of the small Share of Beauty I am Mistress of, I shall most certainly of your Elegance, in raising an Idea so infinitely beyond what it is in Reality. — All I wish is, that in good earnest you may talk yourself into an Imposition on your Judgment, and never see more than now you seem to do, the Faults of

IDAIA.

P. S. I shall impatiently expect you To-morrow at Vicenza, and shall take Care not to wear a Countenance too melancholy, lest it should remind you (more than will be for my Advantage) of our common Loss in the generous Henriquez : — Till then, — Adieu.

IN Contemplations much the same as she had entertained herself with the Night before, did she pass this. The ensuing Day slid on insensibly, while she was employed in studying Airs, and practising in her Glass new Graces, to make the already-charmed *Myrtano* more enflamed. At length he came, and whether the extraordinary Desire each had to please, or that (as most People at some Times look more amiable than at others) that Day they chanced to do so. But the before too potent Charms of both, seemed improved at this second View : The sparkling Eyes of

Myrtano, which before shone with Amazement at the uncommon Beauties they beheld in *Idalia's*, had now a tender Languor, — a swimming Extacy, — a soft, beseeching, nameless Loveliness, mixed with their Lustre, and spake without the Help of Words, the Wishes of his Soul. The mourning Dress he had on set off to vast Advantage the Delicacy of his Complexion, which was of so unmatched a Whiteness, that there required all that Majesty and Loftiness of Mien, which in his whole Deportment shewed itself to keep him from Effeminacy; and, indeed, never did Nature unite such contrary Perfections with so engaging a Harmony as in his Composition: A *distant* View shewed him all *Hero*, adorned with every manly martial Grace, and inspired Awe in the admiring Gazer; but his *near* Approach dissolved in softening Languishments of the Soul, and spoke him formed for all the Joys of *Love*. Thus, but far more enchanting than Description can have Power to represent him, did he appear to the transported *Idalia*; but that the Reader may have some little Notion of his Charms, take the Idea of them set down by her who best knew how to paint them.

The Character of MYRTANO; writ by
IDALIA, and found afterwards in her
Closet.

B Right, lovely, graceful, are all Words below,
What to Myrtano's Character we owe:
Divinely glorious! Godlike! speaks but Part!
He yet has Charms which nearer touch the Heart!
These, awful Wonder, and our Homage claim,
But there's a Sweetness Language cannot name:
A Soul-enchanting Softness (far above
The Reach of Thought, unknowing him to prove)

Dwells

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*Dwells in his Air, amidst his Glories plays,
And tempers, not diminishes the Blaze.*

*HERE Fancy stops to court the Aid of Sense,
Unable to conceive such Excellence!*

*Imagination may a Form create,
Correctly Lovely, and supremely Great;
But, oh! how mean would that Idea be,
To what, indeed, is to be found in Thee!
Joy-mingled Wonder kindles at thy Sight,
And clothes our Admiration with Delight.*

*AS Tapers languish at th' Approach of Day,
And by degrees melt slow their Shine away;
A while they glimmer with contracted Spires,
Trembling, unable to relax their Fires:
But when the Sun's broad Eye is open'd wide,
And Beams thick flashing, shoot on every Side;
No more their emulative Force they try,
But quite o'erwhelm'd with Radiance sink, and die;
So those pale Lights, whose Glare late shar'd our Praise,
Are wholly lost in thy almighty Blaze.
Eras'd and blotted from the Book of Fame,
Her thousand Tongues swell with thy charming Name:
No other Sound now strikes our ravish'd Ears,
No other Form in our glad View appears;
So fully o'er the Soul thy Influence reigns,
That not one Rebel-Thought thy Sway disdains.*

HAD the Lover of *Idalia* been as poetically inclined, it is possible we might have had a better Description of her transmitted to Posterity, than I am able to gather from the imperfect Accounts I received from those who gave me the History of her Life; but since that has not been done, every body is at liberty to form an *Idea* of what appears most pleasing to them; for that she was one of the most lovely of her Sex, is evident from that prodigious Power of charming, which gained her almost as many Admirers, as they had Eyes to gaze upon her.

BUT to return to her Conversation with *Myr-
tano*: — It was such as was agreeable to their Cha-
racters; all Wit, all Elegance, all Tenderneſs, and
Love: They were equally tranſported with each other,
and it is hard to ſay which had the better in this Race
of Paſſion. *Idalia*, indeed, teſtified her's no other
Way than in liſtning with a pleaſed Attention to his
Vows; but there needed no more to make the happy
Lover conſider her as half obtained already, and
though he did not immediately preſs for the Gratifica-
tion of his Wiſhes, he did not in the leaſt deſpair.
He made her ſeveral Viſits, in which nothing hap-
pened of any greater Conſequence than to encrease
her Admiration of him. She never ſaw him without
diſcovering ſome new Perfection; and that Height
of Paſſion with which ſhe at laſt regarded him,
would be injured by an ordinary Lover's Imagina-
tion of it: But notwithstanding the rapturous Re-
flection of being beloved by a Man who appeared
ſo every Way meritorious, ſhe had pretty near as
equal a Share of Diſquiet, that he had never in all his
Sollicitations mentioned the leaſt Word of Marriage.
A thouſand, and a thouſand Times he had told her,
That he lived but in her Sight: — That he ſhould
court Death as a Bleſſing, if any Accident ſhould de-
prive him of her: — That the united Charms of her
whole Sex beſides, would be ineffectual to alienate his
Thoughts one Moment from her; — and ſwore as
many Vows of an eternal Conſtancy, as there were
Saints in Heaven to witneſs them. She knew he aimed
with an unbounded Ardor to poſſeſs her, but knew
not by what Way he wiſhed to do ſo; and this, when-
ever it came croſs her Thoughts, embittered all the
Sweetneſs of his Love, and ſhocked her to the Soul.
She reſolved at length to ſummon all her Courage, to
ſay ſomething to him which ſhould oblige him to
diſcover what his Intentions were; and ſhe had no
ſooner fixed herſelf in a Determination to do ſo,
than ſhe found ſhe had more Cauſe for it than be-
fore ſhe had been ſenſible of.

T H E R E

THERE are Times when even the most prudent are not Masters of their Actions; how then could it be expected that the Young, Gay, Enflamed *Myrta* should have always the Power of commanding his, in Opportunities such as he enjoyed: As yet, indeed, he never had transgressed the strictest Rules of Decency; but *Desire* becoming, by Restraint, more fierce, at last grew wild, and would no longer endure to be controuled by dull Respect.

HE never came to *Vicenza*, but he staid a Night or two: A little Room adjoining to *Idalia's* Chamber was that in which they generally supped together, and seldom parted early. As they were entertaining each other on the usual Theme, and mingling Kisses with their Vows of Passion, by some Accident his Sleeve catching hold of a Corner of a Table on which the Lights were set, he threw it down: What Lover is not fond of Darkness? The impatient *Myrta* blessed the happy Chance; and thinking this the lucky Moment, ordained to give him all his Soul at present longed for, he snatched the trembling Fair, and easily finding his Way into the next Room, bore her to the Bed, and was pretty near the Accomplishment of his Desires, before the Surprise she was in, at this sudden Change of his Behaviour, could permit her to make any Resistance; but when she did, it was so strenuously, that without being guilty of the same Violence as *Ferdinand* had been, it was impossible for him to proceed. In spite of all the tender Passion with which she had regarded him,——in spite of the secret Inclinations which, perhaps, at this very Instant, worked very strongly within her in his Favour,——in spite of all his Tears, his Prayers, his Vows, her Virtue got the better, and triumphed o'er *Desire*. But though she had gained with such unequal Arms a Conquest so truly glorious, she could not assure herself of maintaining it; nor would consent to pardon his Attempt, but on Condition he would leave her, and retire that Moment to his own Appartment. He, who was not of a Humour apt to despond, and had a

real Passion for her, thought it best to comply, not doubting but a second Endeavour might prevail on her to bestow what he found he could not now obtain but by Force.

BUT his Behaviour had wrought a quite different Effect on the Mind of *Idalia* than he imagined:— She had already suffered too much by that unruly Passion, which goes by the mistaken Name of *Love*, to think the Man who took the same Measures had any other Design than to ruin her; and the Racks that she endured in endeavouring to vanquish a Tenderneſs which she had so much Reason to believe an Enemy to her Honour, were past the Reach of Thought. Resolving, however, to be certain of the Truth of what she feared, she put in Execution the Design she before had formed; and as soon as she saw him come into her Chamber the next Morning, plucking up all the Courage she was Mistress of, she saluted him in this Manner: *The Confusion I was in last Night, said she, took from me the Power of resenting, as I ought, the mean Opinion your Behaviour testified you have of my Virtue. I had too entire a Confidence in your Honour to imagine you were capable of harbouring a Thought to my Prejudice; but as you have shewed me the Error I was guilty of, I should indeed deserve Contempt, could I consent to remain longer under a Roof where the Master of it makes so ill a Use of the Power my fond Belief has given him.*— It was to no purpose that he endeavoured to qualify the Bitterness of these Reproaches, by all the tender Expressions he was able; for perceiving he was yet far from making that Offer which alone could convince her he meant her fair, she grew more sensibly enraged; and now bent to try him to the utmost, *Speak no more, Don Myrtano, resumed she, the Man that would dishonour me can never love me.—'Tis brutal Passion, not sincere Affection, that acts as you have done. Did you, indeed, believe me worthy of the Tenderneſs you so well can feign, Respect had governed Appetite, and fettered loose Desire:— All Wishes, all Inclination would have been stifled till*
the

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the Church's Sanction had made it lawful: — But I perceive, too late for my Repose (continued she, bursting into Tears) *that I am fallen too low for such a Hope.* She spoke no more for some Time, both in Expectation of his Answer, and to indulge a few Sighs, which the Suppression of had made uneasy to her. But he was too much confounded at her last Words to be able to return an immediate Answer to them: He lov'd her indeed with a Transcendency of Passion, but there were many Reasons which opposed his marrying her; it being wholly improper, however, for him to tell her so, he artfully evading the Question, turned the Discourse on the unbounded Force of Love, and how little it was in the Power of a Person possessed with it, to repel the most unexcusable Instigations of it. But *Idalia* perceiving, with an Infinity of Grief and Vexation, the Deceit, would not be so put off; and in plain Terms assured him this should be the last Moment of his seeing her, unless he gave her some convincing Proof he had no other Intentions than what would be consistent with her Honour to approve of: Not all his Wit, not all his persuasive Eloquence, than which never Man had more, could furnish him with Expressions prevalent enough to occasion the least Alteration in her Humour. — She still insisted on the Article of Marriage; and he was at last obliged to confess that there were some Particulars in his Circumstances which as yet she was ignorant of, that made it impossible for him to answer her Demands in the Manner she desired at present. He palliated, however, the Bitterness of this Reply with ten thousand Protestations of eternal Love, and giving her a solemn Oath, that in a few Days she should be satisfied in every thing, engaged a Promise from her not to leave *Vicenza* till he returned.

HERE was now an Alteration in the Fate of this distracted Lady: She thought herself the most wretched of created Beings; all that can be conceived of Shame, Despair, Grief, Rage, and Horror, is short of what she felt in this Disappointment of her high-

raised Hopes: — She loved, she loved to Madness a Man whom she was now too sensible aimed only at her Dishonour; and yet she was obliged to him; was still under his Roof; and what was worse, in the cruel Necessity of either still remaining so, or returning to *Venice*, the Thought of which was Death, after the Noise her late Adventures had made there. — O the Severity of the Struggle, when *Love* and *Virtue* are at Variance, and rend the divided Soul with equal Fury! — Yet such was her Condition, and, unable entirely to vanquish the Efforts of *either*, by Turns took part with *both*; and, 'tis uncertain whether wholly following the Emotions of her impatient Passion, she at last had not yielded to be *Myrta-no's* on any Terms, or, guided by the other, had not resolved to quit his House, and fly the Danger which so imminently threatened her if she staid, if in the midst of her Distraction she had not received a Letter which at once determined her Resolve. It came to her the next Day after *Myrta-no* had taken Leave of her; and the Contents, which were written in an unknown Hand, were these:

To Donna *Idalia de Bellsache*.

IF your Willingness to believe has not already rendered the Caution I would give you ineffectual, this may prevent the Ruin which is designed for you.

MY Intimacy with Don *Myrta-no* has not only drawn from him the Secret of your being lodged at his Villa, but also of the Professions he has made you. As you, perhaps, are ignorant of his Engagements with the Niece of Count *Miramont*, you may with the greater Ease be brought to credit what he says: — But after the Knowledge of it, it will, to the Punishment the Crime itself will draw upon you, add that of the Contempt of the whole World, should you persist to listen to his Vows. — In time, most lovely *Idalia*, retire from a Place which is designed the Scene of your Ruin. — The
vain,

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vain, gay, inconstant Myrtano thinks no Woman worthy of a serious Passion: — And as Interest is the greatest Motive of his Marriage, so to triumph over the Weakness of your Sex, is the only Inducement to his Endeavours of adding to the Number of those his Protestations have undone, the credulous Idalia. — I have no other Interest in giving you this Advice, than to save you the Shame and Misery of a too late Repentance, and my Friend the Sin of having occasioned it. — What use you make of it, I shall be informed by him, who will not be at the Pains of concealing any thing he accounts so trivial as an Amour, such as he is entering into with you. — Be kind, therefore, to yourself, fly his destructive Charms; and when you have escaped the Snare, you shall know who was

Your Adviser.

THIS was enclosed in another Paper, on which was writ these Lines:

SINCE I writ the Enclosed, I hear by Don Myrtano, that, apprized of his ungenerous Dealing, you design to quit his House; if it really be your Intention, you ought to have conceal'd it, since he resolves to take effectual Measures to secure you there, at least, till, by Force or Insinuation, he has obtain'd a Gratification of his Desires — which he tells me shall be delayed no longer than a few Days.

As passionately enamoured as Idalia was, she had a Stock of Haughtiness, which nothing could surmount; and her Pride receiving as severe a Shock by this Intelligence as her Virtue, it entirely turned the Scale, and weighed down Love — 's Death! said she to herself, dare he presume to think thus meanly of me? — Solicited for a Prostitute, while in the mean Time his serious Vows are addressed to another! — O Torture! What has the Niece of Miramont to boast superior to the Daughter of Bernardo? — False! — stupid! — blind! ungrateful Traitor! — But I'll not endure it! — Daggers or Poisons shall revenge.

venge me! — I'll murder him, and then myself! In this Manner did she rave, till almost breathless with the swelling Passion, she'd stop, and read the fatal Scroll again: and coming to that Part of it which mentioned that this unknown Adviser had his Intelligence from Myrtano himself, — Hell and Confusion, cried she out, the Villain has exposed me too! — My easy Nature, and my fond Belief is Food for the base Mirth of all his lewd Companions! — Every tender Folly, — each unguarded Languishment betrayed and ridiculed! Distraction! — Can I live, and suffer it! — Then contemplating further on what she had read, — But yet, resumed she, this is the least of Ills, that is already done, the Monster threatens me with more and greater. Oh! whither shall I turn to escape? As she was employed in these perplexed Meditations, a Servant that used to attend her in her Chamber, came in to ask if she wanted any thing. Idalia, who was by Nature extremely violent in all her Passions, and had taken the least Pains to vanquish them, could not contain herself before this Creature; and Jealousy being the uppermost Emotion of her Soul, she presently enquired if she knew the Niece of Count Miramont: To which the Wench having answered that she did, — And is she handsome? cried the other impatiently. To an infinite Degree, said the cunning Creature: Heaven never made a Face more beautiful, except your own. — No Flattery, resumed Idalia, I am not in a Humour to receive it. — But if you would oblige, inform me of all you know concerning the intended Marriage between that Lady and your Master. Ardella, so she was called, affected a prodigious Surprise at these Words, and suffered herself to be asked a hundred Times before she made any Reply; and when she did, it was in such a Manner as gave no Satisfaction. This Behaviour put Idalia almost beside herself, she was perswaded that she knew more than she was willing to reveal; and, wild with the Uncertainty, prayed, promised, threatened, and accompanied all she said with such Pressures, that the other

other appeared moved by them, and at last confessed, That her Master was indeed to be married to that Lady; that every thing was at that very Time preparing for their Nuptials; —and that never were two Persons more passionately charmed with each other than they appeared to be. — *But*, Madam, added she with a well-counterfeited Fear, *should you reveal the least Syllable of what I have told you, to my Master, I am certain he would not let me live an Hour.* — *Trouble not yourself*, cried Idalia, interrupting her, *I never more will see him.* — No, continued she, raising her Voice, and stamping, *I call just Heaven, and every Saint to witness, I never will consent to see or hear him more: — Too much already have I listened to his perjured Vows; — which, when I do again, may all the Plagues of Earth and Hell fall on me: — May I be ruined, then thrown off to scorn, — driven round the World with no Companion but my Infamy, and not one Friend to pity, or relieve me, till some unlocked for, horrid kind of Death o'ertakes me, and sinks my Soul, with all its Load of Guilt, beyond the reach of Mercy.* — A thousand such like Imprecations did she make; but where to go to avoid the Penalty of them, she was for a good while undermined. At last she remembered to have heard of a Monastery at *Verona*, which being a Place she was utterly unknown at, she made choice of: It was there she designed to fix, knowing it would be easy for her, immediately after she was introduced, to write to her Father for a Supply of Money, against the Time of her being initiated; for she was now in the Mind to leave the World for ever. She could not think of quitting *Myrtano's* House without the Knowledge of *Ardella*, and therefore communicated to her what her Intentions were; to which she, with a seeming Reluctance, consented, and promised to order Things for her Departure, with that Secrecy, that no other Servant in the Family should have any Suspicion of it.

ALL the necessary Preparations for her little Journey being made, by Break of Day she left *Vicenza*; but with what Heart-akings, those who, like her, have tore themselves from all that's dear, can best be judge. At her Departure she gave a Letter to *Arabella*, with a pressing Entreaty to deliver it to *Myrta*. It was full of Upbraidings, mixed with Tenderness, and expressed in so moving a Manner the Anguish of her Soul, that it was scarce possible for a Heart which had ever known the Force of Love, to read it without melting; and perhaps, even in the midst of her Indignation, was not without a Wish that it might bring him after her to *Verona*. — She had still Remains enough of Vanity to desire to have him in her Power, though she had made so solemn a Vow never to make any other Use of it, than to disdain and hate him.

BUT what befel her in her Way to *Verona*, and the vast Variety of surprising Incidents which ensued each other through the whole Course of her unhappy Life, I must defer till another Opportunity; having already spun out the *Beginning* of her Misfortunes to such a Length, that the *Continuance* of them would give me a just Apprehension of becoming tiresome to those I endeavour to divert.

The End of the First Part.



I D A.



IDA L I A:

OR, THE

Unfortunate Mistress.

P A R T II.



WITH no other Companions than her own disturbed Meditations, and one Man, whom Don *Myrtano's* Servant-Maid had provided for her as a Guide, did the sorrowful *Idalia* quit the House of her Beloved. They had not travelled many Hours, before she found herself in a Place suited, as it were, by Nature, to her present Disposition : It was a Forest, wild and desolate; the trackless Paths discovered not that any humane Feet had ever trod them.— No Fields of Corn, no Vines, no Olives here were planted; no limpid Streams, no cool refreshing Rivulets appeared to charm the Eye with gay delightful Prospects, and with their pleasing Murmurs sooth the list'ning Ear; but sapless Trees, whose wind-bent, leafless Twigs hung quivering to oppose the Traveller's

veller's Passage, and rank and unwholesome Weeds unfit for Use, hemmed in the Borders of some stagnate Brooks, which here and there, by Length of Time, the falling Rains had made, composed a sad unblest Variety, and spread an *Area* of nought but Horror. The deep *Resvery* she was in, which the melancholy Solitude of every thing about her had indulged, prevented her from taking any Notice how improbable it was that this should be a Road, especially such a one as that of Consequence must be, which led to *Verona*, than which no Town in *Italy* was more frequented: But they were not entered into it above some two or three hundred Paces, before the Man, appointed to conduct her, stopping his Horse, obliged her to do so too; and looking on her with a Countenance between stern and troubled, *Madam*, said he, *what think you of this Place? Does it not seem cut out for Rapes and Murders, and every Act of Horror?* These Words, and the Manner in which they were spoke, was sufficient to rouse *Idalia* from that Lethargy of Thought she had been in, and wake her into Terror. *Could I believe my Life were an Offence*, replied she, *or were I conscious of any Action which should excite Revenge, I might, indeed, suspect that I should find it here.*—*Innocence*, resumed he, *is not always a Protection*—*You have, perhaps, incurred more Displeasure than you are sensible of;—for what Cause, is not my Business to examine, but I have received a Reward to put an End to your Misfortunes by this*—With these last Words he shewed her a Dagger, which he had wore concealed under his Riding-coat. As much as *Idalia* had threatened to do a Violence on herself, as much as she thought Life a Burden, ruined in her Fortune and Reputation, disappointed in her Love and deprived of every thing the World calls dear, the Imagination she was so near Death, made her Soul shake with Agonies unfelt before: She burst into a Flood of Tears, and throwing herself at his Feet, conjured him to spare her, in Terms so soft, so moving, so perswasive, that the
Heart

Heart which had denied, must have been more than savage: The most hardened and accustomed Murderer must have relented at such a pity-moving Object, and dropped the Dagger, if not turned the Point against himself, for having thus alarmed her.—What then became of him whose Sentiments, however he appeared at present, were full of Honour, and scorned so base, so barbarous a Deed. Tears started from his Eyes, and his whole Frame seemed convulsed with inward Tremblings: *Rise, Madam, rise* (said he, as soon as he had Power to speak) *and, if you can forgive the Terror I have caused, and for which I am ready to expire with Grief and Penitence. — But, to convince you, I never had a Thought to execute the bloody Purpose I presumed to threaten; I have provided you a Place where you may remain in Safety, which it is impossible you can do at Verona.* The blooming Colour which had so lately forsook the Cheeks of the affrighted Fair, returned, at this Assurance, with all its wonted Beauty; and looking more earnestly than she had done before on the Person whose Behaviour had given her such different Emotions, she could easily perceive, though his Garb was mean, his Air, and the Address with which he pronounced these last Words, were far from that of a *Russian*. She imagined also, that she saw something in his Face which was not unknown to her; but when or how she had been acquainted with it, was out of her Power to recollect.

AFTER she had testified the Sense she had of his obliging Offer by some Expressions of Gratitude, she desired to be informed of what he knew concerning the Inhumanity intended against her, and who they were that persecuted her with such a causeless Malice. To which, after a little Pause, he replied in this Manner: *It is easy for you, Madam, said he, to guess that Ardella had her Share in the abhorred Design, because you know very well that it was by her I was appointed your Conductor; and I shall make no Scruple to confess that it was from her Mouth I received*
my

my Orders to dispatch you, and from her Hand my Hire, which was, indeed, a Sum too great for a Creature of her Station to bestow, and, if she had not told me, that by performing her Injunction I should oblige a powerful Friend, would have made me know it must be to a Person of the highest Rank I owed it. 'Twould be impossible to represent the Consternation Idalia was in at hearing these Words: An Imagination came immediately into her Head more dreadful to her than the Death she had escaped; and lifting up her Eyes, streaming a second Time with Tears, O too well (cried she) too well I understand you! Myrtano's Servant could not reach the Price of such an Undertaking; but Myrtano's self might well afford it,— Oh! 'tis he,— 'tis he (pursued she, in an Agony which was not far off Distraction) the false, ungrateful, perjured Man! Conscious of Guilt, and taught by my Behaviour how much I scorned to aid his brutal Raptures, the Passion he avowed is turned to Hate! — Engaged to another, and unable to perform what Honour did require, my Death alone could silence my Upbraidings! Cruel Reward for Love! Inhuman Policy! — Barbarous Myrtano! —

In these and many more the like Complainings did she pour out the Anguish of her Soul, without any Regard to the Person who was witness of them; nor would he interrupt her, being willing to be let into the whole Affair between her and Myrtano, till perceiving she was silent. Though for many Reasons, Madam, said he, Don Myrtano is the Man in the World I least esteem, yet I cannot suffer you to continue in this Opinion, without being guilty of an Injustice I could not answer to myself. — Myrtano, Madam, I dare swear, is perfectly innocent of any Design against your Life: — What he may have formed against your Honour, yourself is the best Judge.

He said no more, waiting to hear in what Manner she would reply; but tho' the Alteration of her Looks and Gestures sufficiently testified the Effect his Words had wrought in her, she forbore to speak how much

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much she rejoiced to find *Myrtano* guiltless of the Crime she had just now suspected him of, and probably imagining he might also be so of every thing he had been accused of, conjured her kind Informer to acquaint her if there were any thing of Truth in the Report, that he was to be married to the Niece of Count *Miramont*; which he assuring her that there was, and that the Nuptials were to be solemnized so suddenly, that all the necessary Preparations for the Magnificence of it were as good as finished, made her again relapse into her former Violence of Temper. — *Then he is a Traitor still* (cried she, transported at once with Grief and Indignation) *and is guilty of a worse Crime than conspiring against my Life could be: — My Peace of Mind, my everlasting Quiet he has destroyed, — exposed, — betrayed me to a Rival's Scorn! — 's Death! to pretend Courtship to me, at the very Time he was soliciting another, — the same insinuating Looks, — the same dissembled Tendernefs, — the same undoing Vows addressed to both at once! was ever Man so base?* She had run on with a great deal more of the same Nature, if he had not put a Stop to her, by telling her, That whatever Reason she had to condemn *Myrtano*; his intended Bride had certainly an equal Share, who loved as much, and was as much deceived: — *Nay, infinitely more* (added he) *in my Opinion, since, had not her Quality been too great for him to hazard such a Breach, you had doubtless had the Preference in all Things, as well as in his Affections.* Notwithstanding the solemn Vow *Idalia* had made never to see him more, she could not be told any thing which flattered the Tendernefs she had for him, without feeling a secret Pleasure; and having entered into a Discourse of the Lady designed to be his Wife, she asked a thousand Questions concerning her Wit, Beauty, and Humour; for this envied Fair having been brought up from her Infancy at Rome with her Uncle Count *Miramont*, and but lately come to Venice, she had never happened to see her; but her jealous Curiosity received but little Satisfaction in this Point; there appeared

appeared in the Person she enquired of a great Unwillingness to make any Answers to such Interrogatories; and to put an End to them, he reminded her, that if she designed to go to that little *Asylum* he had provided for her, it was high Time to begin their Journey, it being a good many Miles distant from the Place they now were in. She readily acquiesced, and that Evening about Sun-set arrived at a neat, but small Dwelling, such as the Poet describes to be the Abode of *Baucis* and *Philemon*: A good old Man and Woman, pretty near the same Age, came forth to welcome her, and, while her Guide was employed in taking Care of his Horses, conducted her in, and shewed her to a Chamber, which though it could boast no Finery, was extremely clean and decent, and had every thing in it fit to charm a contemplative Mind. The Windows were covered with *Fillarée* and *Jessamine*, only where here and there Spaces were cut to give the Eye a most delightful Prospect o'er distant Meadows, Fields and Vineyards; a sweet Confusion *without* filled the whole rural Scene, and fed extensive Thought with all the Charms of Nature:— *Within*, a vast Variety of collected Books, and choicest Maps, brought to the View the spacious Universe, improving Reason with the Aids of *Art*.

IDALIA, whose Wishes at this Time were dead to all the noisy Splendor of a Town, seemed perfectly pleased with it, and told her Hosts she should think it the greatest Blessing Life could now afford her, to be permitted to spend the Remainder of her Days with them in that agreeable Retirement. While she was speaking, he who had brought her there, came into the Room, and took upon him to answer what she had been saying in this Manner: *I am highly satisfied, Madam, said he, that there is any thing which can make you wish a Confinement here, so long as is necessary for your Safety; but can never consent, that after that Time you should deprive the World of its most valuable Ornament: — No, no, (continued he, very respectfully) you must again shine out the Star*

of

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of Venice adored by all who gaze upon you, and resume that native Lustre which the Baseness of Mankind has for a while eclipsed, but never can extinguish. — O talk of it no more (interrupted she) I never will return to Venice. What! to see the History of my Misfortunes writ in the Smiles of every Face that meets me! — to endure the stinging Satire, the Reflections which all the Friends of Ferdinand and Henriquez will throw upon me! — and that worst Curse, the Scorn of that too happy hated she, who soon, you say, Myrtano must call Wife! — O no! I cannot bear it! — ruined in all my Hopes, and past the Power of even Heaven itself to make my Woes less terrible, I'll hide them ever from the unpitying World, and die alone unknown, and unlamented. Were your Condition so desperate as you imagine (resumed he) I know not if I should persuade you to return; but there may be, perhaps, a Way found out to bring you to your Father's Arms with as much Honour as when you left them, and raise you above the Rage or the Disdain of all whom you call Enemies. Oh! forbear (said she, unwilling to give Way to a Hope of any thing which seemed so much an Impossibility) forbear, obliging Stranger! to turn my Thoughts back on the Scene of my past Happiness, or sooth Imagination with such idle Flattery of what's to come. — Can e'er the Days of Innocence return? — Can my polluted Honour e'er be cleansed from the vile Stain it bears? — Can I again appear a Virgin? — Racking Reflections! — Why do you rouze them in me? — Why, after such Proofs of Generosity and Pity, do you alarm Remembrance with these dread Ideas, to make Thought sick, the Light grow hateful to me, and that Life you gave scarce worth my Thanks. Far be it from me (answered he, bowing) to renew the Memory of what may be distasteful; but I would fain persuade you to believe, that Heaven, which has so miraculously preserved your Life, will also make it happy. — Surprising Things by a Hand unseen are often brought to pass: When you left Myrtano's House, you little suspected that the Person appointed for your Guide, was

was designed to be your Murderer : Nor did they, who bribed me to that execrable Deed, imagine how distant my Thoughts were from such an Undertaking : — Why then should you not hope, that by some Turn of Fate, as strange and unexpected, you may again be blessed. — Oh ! 'tis impossible (cried the uneasy Idalia) Suppose (resumed the other hastily) your Beauty, in spite of all has happened, should charm a Man whose Quality and Fortune you could have no Objections to, the Title of his Wife would silence Calumny, restore your Fame, and make you thought as happy as he'd be truly blessed. If such an Offer (replied she, in a haughty Air) ever should occur, he must have more than Quality and Fortune to recommend him to my Esteem : Fallen as I am, I would be lower yet, rather than sell my Liberty for sordid Interest, and the World's Opinion. — No, no, though lost to all besides, I still am Mistress of myself, — my own unconquerable Will ! — Idalia can be by nought but Inclination subdued ; and that, alas (pursued she softening her Voice) is lavished all on the too-lovely, false Myrtano. — 'Tis therefore in Solitude alone I can have Peace ; — removed from the tumultuous World its short-liv'd Pleasures, and its lasting Cares, I'll languish out a dull, insipid, tranquil Life, and sink by unperceived Degrees into the Grave. And have you no Reluctance (resumed he) no soft Regret for all the racking Griefs your noble Father's Heart endures, while ignorant where you are ? 'Twas my Design (answered she) to have writ to him from Verona ; but as I am disappointed of the Journey I intended thither, I have not now Convenience. If that (cried he, in a Tone which expressed a Zealousness to serve her) will be any way conducive to your Satisfaction, I offer my self to be the Messenger. — Prepare a Letter, and it shall be faithfully delivered ; and whatever other Trust you would repose in me, depend on the Execution of with the same Assurance as though you saw it done.

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THE prodigious Obligations *Idalia* had received from him, made her scrupulous of adding to the Number, by giving him any future Troubles; which he perceiving, protested that the highest Recompence she could make for what he had done, was to permit him to continue to do her all the good Offices in his Power: But she, whose Disposition was utterly averse to receiving Favours, especially at a Time when she considered herself not in a Condition to return them, would very feign have declined making any farther Use of him, telling him she would stay at that House but till she was a little recovered from the Fatigue she had been in, and then either pursue her Journey to *Verona*, or go to some other Place where there was a Monastery, being absolutely determined to become a Nun. But this last Resolution seemed to alarm him much more than every thing she had said before:— And after a little Pause, he let her know that this was not the Way to recompense the Civilities he had done her — If you look on any thing that I have done (said he) as an Obligation, you would permit me to receive my Thanks from Don Bernardo; perhaps it may be in his Power to make me ample Reparation for that little Loss of Time it will take me up to go to Venice. — This Expression, and some others to the same Purpose, won her to do as he desired. She consented to write, because her Father should requite the Obligations she had received: But when she was about to do it, never was she at such a Loss in what Manner she should begin, or whether she should conceal or discover the Misfortunes she had met with. At last, after many blottings-out, and tearing, she made a shift to write these few Lines.

TO DON BERNARDO.

I Doubt not, most honoured Seignior, but at the Receipt of this, you will expect to be satisfied at full, of the Reasons which have deprived you of a Daughter;—

ter;— but it is not the least of my Misfortunes that they are of such a Nature, that the disclosing them would add to their Severity.— Pardon then, I beseech you, that I conceal them even from you,— and with the same Indulgence I have formerly found, continue to think of me ——— I never can be happy enough to see you more, being determined to forsake the World. As to my Choice of a Monastery, and what Order I should take, I leave to your Management, as I shall some Part of my History to be related to you by the Bearer of this, to whom I am not only indebted for my Life, but also this Opportunity of entreating your Blessing, and avowing my self ever

Your most Obedient,

though Unhappy Daughter,

IDALIA.

P. S. My Deliverer informs me it is in Don Bernardo's Power to more than recompense the Obligation he has heaped upon Idalia.— If so, I know he need no more than to acquaint you in what Manner to engage your grateful Assent.

WITH this Letter, she gave to him that was to carry it a Ring from her Finger, entreating him to accept of that as an Acknowledgement of her Gratitude, which he received with an Extacy of Joy, a Transport impossible to be concealed, and far above what the intrinsic Value of it, meerly as a Ring (had it been worth a thousand Times more than it was) could have raised in the most covetous Mind. She observed it with a Surprize as visible to him, as was the Rapture he had been in to her; and unwilling she should infer any further from it than he thought proper to declare, *I am extremely glad, Madam, said he, of this Testimony, which, to those who employed me, will appear an infallible one, that I*
have

have murdered you; and by that Means, perhaps, engage an Addition to the Reward I have already received. These last Words were uttered so awkwardly, and were so little of a Piece with the rest of his Behaviour, that it rather increased than diminished the Consternation she was in. There passed not much more between them; he seemed in haste to be gone, and only recommending her to the Care of the People of the House, and assuring her, that in a very few Days he would return with an Answer to her Letter, took his Leave.

THE Emotions she was in, when left at Liberty to consider on what had befallen her since she came from *Vicenza*, were at once pleasing and vexatious: Her Deliverance from so imminent a Danger, commanded her most thankful Acknowledgments; but then the Confirmation of the Falshood of *Myrtano* made her almost wish for Death: — To reflect on the Behaviour of this unknown Person, led her into such a mazy Labyrinth of Thought, that she could neither get out, nor in the least assure herself where it would end. — There appeared something so contradictory in his Words and Actions, that it was impossible for her to form any Judgment of him. — His Garb was the meanest that could be; but yet there was 'an undescribable Somewhat in his Air, which spoke him accustomed to wear better. — The Reward he told her he had received to murder her, would have made her believe he must be of the lowest Rank of Life; but when the noble Derefstation which sparkled in his Eyes at mentioning it, declared him far above even pretending to enter into such Measures, without some Reason for it, which, at present, she could not penetrate into: — But the most shocking Consideration of all was, that she saw, by his Manner of receiving the Ring, — by some unguarded Words and Sighs, which, in spite of the Care he took to suppress them, burst with Vehemence from his troubled Breast, that her Beauty had had the same Effect on him, it was ordinary for it

it to cause in others; and as vain and proud of giving Pain as she had ever been, could not look on this Conquest without the utmost Disquiet: If he was of that inferior Degree he spoke himself, nothing could be more galling than the Thoughts of being beloved by such a one; and if he were a Man of that Quality, which some Part of his Behaviour denoted, she had Reason enough to fear she had fled from *Vicenza* for no other End than to give an Opportunity to one to act what she had done a Violence on her own Inclination to avoid from another. *How wretched is my Fate* (said she to herself) *Have I, to preserve my Honour free from any second Stain, broke through the soft Enchantments of my Passion, and tore my very Heart-strings; when I resolved to quit the dear, the lov'd Myrtano's House; and am now in the Power of a Stranger, one who looks on me with the same Desires,—the same wild Vehemence of Longing!—One, who, for ought I know, has brought me hither only to do what Ferdinand has done, and what Myrtano would!—* The more she deliberated, the more she found the Probability of this Conjecture, and, at last, confirmed herself in the Reality of it so much, that she grew the most terrified Creature that ever was.

MORE Days had passed since the Departure of the Stranger than she expected he would be absent; in which Time she had used her utmost Endeavour to discover who he was, by the old Man and Woman of the House; but they, faithful to the Trust reposed in them, would not reveal the least Tittle, either of his Name or Family; and this Secrecy did not a little contribute to fix her in that Opinion she before had entertained, That she was placed there in order to be the Sacrifice to his Passion as soon as he should return; and put her on a thousand Inventions how to avoid it: But, alas! what would the most subtle working Wit, backed by the firmest Resolution, avail in a Circumstance such as hers? She was in a Place which she neither knew the Name of, nor in what Part of the Country it stood, and under the Care of
People,

People, who she easily perceived, though they waited on her with all possible Obedience, had a strict Eye on her Behaviour: For saying to them one Day, with an Intention of sounding them, that if she had a Conveniency, she would go to *Verona*, and wait there till either the Stranger should return, or she should hear from her Father by some other Way; they told her they could not consent she should leave them, till they had Permission from the Person who had brought her there. This was sufficient to make her know there was no Possibility of escaping by their Means; but being fully bent some Way or other to do it, she never left racking her Brains, till she had found a Stratagem, which, though she could not promise herself she should succeed in, would be of no Prejudice to her if it should fail. She told her old Landlord, that finding herself a little indisposed, she believed it would be of infinite Service to her Health if she walked out in a Morning and Evening to take the Air, as she observed he did: But, said she, *I do not care to venture in the Dress I have been used to appear in, lest any Passengers happening to travel this Way, should discover me: It would therefore be the greatest Obligation you could confer on me, if you would provide me with a Habit, whereby I might be disguised, and by that Means have the Freedom of ranging thro' those delightful Groves and Meadows, the Prospect of which appears so tempting from my Windows.* The old Trustee looked on his Wife all the Time *Idalia* had been speaking, as tho' it was from her Approbation he was to form his Answer; who, as soon as she perceived the other had concluded what she had to say, gave it in this Manner: *I do not think (said she) that our Friend would thank us, if we should deny a Request so far from unreasonable.—— The Air, indeed may do the Lady good, and the whimsical Merriment of Men, who, at this Time of Year, come in great Numbers to gather Mulberry-leaves for their Silk-worms, divert her Melancholy:—— I would have you, by all Means, provide her with a Dress, such as*

our Country Maids are used to wear, and she may pass, and partake of all our rural Pleasures the Time she stays here, without any Danger of Suspicion. The Heart of *Idalia* leaped in her Breast at this ready Assent of the Woman's, which was immediately followed by her Husband's; and in a few Hours this *Court Beauty* was transformed into a plain *Country Lass*; and though no Dress could render her any other than the most lovely Woman in the World, yet so great was her Desire to be taken for what she represented, that she mimick'd the Simplicity of their Blushes, and Way of curtsyng so artfully, that those who were most acquainted with her might have talked to her some Time before they discovered the Deceit.

HAVING carried on her Plot thus far, the next Thing she had to do, was to counterfeit a Chearfulness, and appear so highly satisfied with her Condition, that her *Guardians* might not imagine she had any Wishes to exchange it; and be less watchful over her; for wherever she went, they had continually attended her. But her Artifice deceived them so well, that by Degrees they grew more remiss, and at length would leave her to the Privilege of meditating, as sometimes she took a Book out with her, or diverting herself with talking or listening to the comical Discourses of the Country Fellows employed in tying the Vines, and gathering Mulberry-leaves. She would not take her Flight the first Opportunity she had, because she did not know but they might have left her only to make trial what she would do, and be near enough to prevent her going, in case she should attempt it: But one Day, having neither of them within hearing, she enquired, as though without Design, what Towns were in the Neighbourhood of that Place; and was informed, that she was about forty Miles from any, but that the nearest was *Vorseny*. It was no small Grief to her to hear she was so remote, not believing she could be able to travel so far on Foot: However, nothing being so dreadful to her as the Apprehensions what might befall her, if she tarried

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ried where she was, she resolved to run all other Hazards to escape that; and looking on it as a particular Mark of the Care Providence had of her, in delaying the Stranger's Return so much longer than was expected, she thought it would be no other than running wilfully into a Misfortune, to neglect making use of the smallest Means that should offer to take her from it. The very next Time therefore that she found herself free from the Observation of her two Attendants, she walked as fast as her Strength would permit, directed by the Sun, through that Part of the Country which she had been told led her to *Vorseny*. She came at length to a great Road, where she saw Numbers of poor People of both Sexes driving Asses before them, loaded with these Leaves, which they had gathered in the Morning, and were carrying to the Merchants. It was no small Consolation to the fair Wanderer to have something of her own Species to converse with, having till now met with no other Company in her Pilgrimage than the Dumb Kind. — But being asked by some of them, whither she was going, and how it happened that such a fair young Maid undertook so great a Journey alone, and on Foot, she was at the greatest Loss in the World what Answer to make; till at last, bethinking herself what would be most suitable to the Capacities of those who enquired, and best disguise the Truth, she told them, That having a very severe Mother-in-Law, she had fled from her ill Usage, and was going to seek a Service at *Vorseny*. The good People pity'd her extremely, and perceiving she was ready to faint with Weariness, contrived a Way to set her on one of their Beasts, by taking off its Burden of Leaves, and dividing it into as many Parcels as there were Asses, added a little to every one. By this Means she got safe to the Town; and thanking her Fellow-travellers for their Kindness, there took Leave of them. She went into a common Inn, being in no danger of being known in that Place, especially in the Garb she was in. The Fatigue she had undergone, made it necessary she

should for some Time repose herself: But, alas! the Disorders of her Mind would suffer her to take but little Rest, the various Adventures she had run thro' since that fatal Time of going to meet the perfidious *Florez*, the Grief her Absence and Disgrace had brought on her unhappy *Father*,—the Death of *Henriquez*,—her own eternal Ruin by the Violence of *Ferdinand*,—the Agonies she had, and ever must endure for the Fallhood of the lovely *Myrtano*,—the Terror she had been in from the discovered Passion of the Unknown,——and the racking Perplexity where, or in what manner she should linger out the Residue of her unhappy Days, came all at once into her Thoughts, and threw her into a Condition little different from Madness.

SOME Weeks passed before she could get leave of her Confusion to resolve on any thing, till the little Stock of Money she had about her being pretty near exhausted, she began to consider that this was not a Place to continue in; and remembering that a young Lady, formerly an Intimate of her's, having on some Discontent forsook the World, was at a Convent of *Benedictines* at *Naples*, she promis'd herself a good deal of Satisfaction in her Company, if by any Means she could reach thither: But it was so prodigious a Distance by Land, that it would require infinitely more to defray the Expence of such a Journey, than she was Mistress of. She therefore thought it the best Way to go first to *Ancona*; which being a great Seaport Town, she did not doubt meeting with a Vessel there bound for the Place she desired. Every thing answered her Expectations, and nothing of any Moment happening till she was got on Board, I shall omit the Repetition of any Particulars of her little Journey, or the Uneasiness she was in while she staid at *Ancona*, which she was obliged to do, the Ship she had agreed to go in not being ready to sail in above a Month, and when it was, detained almost as long by adverse Winds.

THE Power of Beauty is the same in all Degrees; the plain Country Habit which disguised the Daughter of a *Grandée* could not deprive *Idalia* of her wonted Charms: She appeared so lovely in the Eyes of *Rickamboll*, the Captain of the Ship, that from the first Moment he beheld her, he thought of nothing but the Means to possess her. He concealed his Intentions, however, till she was come on Board; but he no sooner had her in his Power, than he let her know he would make use of it for the Gratification of his Passion, if she consented not to yield to his Persuasions.

WHAT was now the Anguish, the Fear, the Horror, which seized the Soul of this unhappy Lady? All that was passed appeared a Blessing to her present State; confined within a little wooden World, whose proud Sovereign was absolute, and from the Fierceness of whose Nature she had no room to hope that Prayers or Tears would be of Force to melt him!—Here was no Possibility of escaping but by immediate Death; and what she suffered in the Apprehension of his Brutality, is not to be described by Words; so I shall only say, it was such as could be equalled by nothing but his barbarous Insensibility of it. Trembling, fainting, and almost dying with her Fears, she was on her Knees in her Cabin imploring Heaven's Protection, when the Monster, resolved to perpetrate his horrid Wishes, came in to know her last Resolve. Perceiving his Intent, she would fain have flattered him into a Belief there was a Possibility of gaining her by gentle Means, and entreated him but to have Patience till they came on Shore: But he, who understood no more of Love than the brutal Part, burning to enjoy her, and not suspecting her to be of any higher Station than what her Habit represented, thought to make use of any further Ceremony would be an Indignity to himself, and by his *Actions*, as well as *Words*, let her see he was not to be moved. In vain she endeavour'd to set forth the Baseness of the Deed;—in vain she wept, entreated, threatened; the Villain hardened in such Crimes, but laughed at her

her Despair, and she was just on the Point of being reduced to a Condition, such as, if she had lived after it, would have made her for ever hateful to herself, when Heaven, by the most unexpected Means, sent her a Deliverance. The Oaths and Curses, with which the boisterous *Rickamboll* had endeavoured to silence her Shrieks, on a sudden were out-done by a confused and superior Roar on Deck; and immediately after a Discharge of Guns went off so loud, the Ship seemed shattered with the Noise! — A General Voice cried, *Where's our Captain?* and three or four of the affrighted Sailors burst into the Cabin, bawling out in their rude Fashion, That they were undone; a *Barbary Corsair* had clapped his grappling Irons on Board, and Death or Captivity was all they could expect. — *'s Death! could you not avoid him? Had you no Warning?* said *Rickamboll*, starting from his amorous Combat: *But he shall find no Cowards here.* With these Words he run out of the Cabin, followed by the rest of the Men, leaving the distressed *Idalia* in a Dilemma, to which Party she should wish Success. If *Rickamboll* was victorious, she had no hope of escaping the Ill his wild Desires threatened her with, and Slavery itself seemed far less dreadful to her: — But then the Thoughts of being in the Power of *Infidels*, who, 'twas highly probable, might be inspired with the same Wishes, and would make no Scruple to use a *Christian Captive* as they pleased, frightened her almost to Death. — The Apprehensions of what she expected would ensue, whatever was the Issue of the Fight, drowned all the Terrors of the *present* Danger, which, whoever has been Witness of one of these Sea-Skirmishes, may easily comprehend: But it lasted not long, the Number of the *Infidels* was infinitely superior to the *Christians*, and by the Death of *Rickamboll*, and some of the stoutest of his Men, the rest of them, with the Ship, became an easy Prize. *Idalia*, all this while at her Devotions, was ignorant of what had happened, till she saw a Stranger of a most graceful Mein, attended by several Followers,

lowers, come down the Stairs, and enter the Cabin where she was. *Abdomar* (for that was the Name of this Conqueror) had been formerly a Prisoner at *Florence*, and spoke very good *Italian*; which was no inconsiderable Piece of good Fortune to this fair Captive; for the obliging Terms he accosted her with (in spite of the Meanness of her Habit) dissipated, immediately, great part of her Fears; and reading in her Tears and Tremblings the Agony she was in, *Be of Comfort, lovely Maid*, said he, *you are fallen into the Power of one, who scorns to take an ungenerous Advantage of it, — one who has it not in his Nature willingly to offend any of your Sex, much less one to whom Heaven has been so particularly bountiful in bestowing all that can command Respect. — Your Lot, perhaps* (continued he, perceiving she was still in some Disorder) *may become more glorious by this Captivity, than Freedom could offer you the Means to make it; — the most angelick, softest, kindest, best that ever was called Woman, will by her Tenderness and Indulgence, make you forget whatever may have been dear to you, and oblige you to place your whole Felicity, as it will be your Honour to be near her. — Nothing* in *Idalia's* present Circumstance could have afforded her a Consolation adequate to these last Words: To hear he was a Lover, and that he was accompanied by his Adored, entirely set her free from those Apprehensions which of late had been so afflicting to her. And as soon as he had given Orders for securing the other Prisoners under Hatches, suffered herself to be conducted by him into that Ship of which he was Commander, with all the Chearfulness imaginable; as thinking, in being delivered from the brutal Attempt of *Rickamboll*, she had been delivered from the most terrible Misery that could befall her. *Abdomar* led her immediately into a Cabin, adorned with the choicest Curiosities which Art could produce in all the various Climates of the habitable World; the Floor was covered with the most rich, as well as most beautiful Tapestry that ever was seen; the Ground was

Silver, on which were so dextrously interwoven all manner of fine Flowers, that they seemed more the Handy-work of Nature than of human Skill; the Windows, which *without* were fenced from the dashing of the Waves with Chrystal in the manner of half Globes, *within* were chequered with green and gold Twist, each Square being joined with precious Stones: Diamonds, Rubies, Emeralds, Chrysolites, and Saphirs, with their various coloured Lustre, spread such a dazzling Glory round the Room, that it even pained the Eye to look upon it: The greatest Magnificence that ever *Idalia* had beheld in *Venice*, than which no City in the World can boast of more, was so infinitely short of what now met her Eyes, that she had longer and more heedfully regarded it, had not a greater, and yet surpassing Wonder appear'd to attract her Admiration; it was the charming *Bell-raizia*, Mistress of *Abdomar*, who, rising from a Couch of Crimson Taffety embroidered with Gold and Pearl, stepped forward to meet and congratulate her Lover on his Victory. She spoke to him in the Language of their own Country, but there was something so sweet, so soft, so engaging in her Voice, that rendered it an Impossibility to hear her, without feeling some Part of that Pleasure which the looking on her did in a greater abundance bestow. To the most lovely and enchanting Form that Nature ever made, there was also added all the Embellishments of Art:— Had she been in a Court where it was the sole Business of all about her to study what would most become her, she could not have been dress'd with greater Elegance: Her Hair, which was whiter, and more shining than Silver, and hung down in Tresses below her Waist, was only kept from falling o'er her Face by a Fillet of Diamonds; but as the greatest *Art* is to appear *artless*, this seeming Negligence had in it something so infinitely beyond the formal Ornaments of the *Europeans*, that whoever would desire to please, must covet to look like this lovely *Barbarian*. On the Middle of the Fillet there was fixed a sort of a little Tree of Gold,

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Gold, on the Branches of which hung Jewels of a prodigious Largeness, but such a Height above her Head, that (the Sprigs on which they were fastened being shaded by some loose Hair, which flew out as tho' disdainful of Restraint) made it seem to the Eye as tho' they were self poized, and formed a Constellation like *Ariadne's* Crown. On her slender and fine proportioned Body, she had a close Jacket of Gold Stuff; but the Sleeves were large, and tied up before almost as high as her Shoulders, with small Sky-coloured Ribband mixed with Silver, and discover'd, as much as Decency would permit, her lovely Arms, which were encompassed with Bracelets of several sorts of Jewels. In fine, her whole Appearance, her Face, her Shape, her Hair, her Habit, was surpassing what the most extensive Imagination can figure out, and forced *Idalia* (who was not over quick-sighted to the Perfections of her own Sex) whether she would or no, to confess within herself, that she had never seen any thing so beautiful! so glorious!

AFTER some little Discourse between the two Lovers, *Abdomar* presenting *Idalia*, said in *Italian*, *What other Prizes my late Conquest has made me Master of, I thought unworthy of Bellraizia's Notice, but this fair Maid, if she appear the same in your Eyes, as at first Sight she did to mine, may merit to attend you.* The charming *Infidel* answered these Words in Terms infinitely obliging to *Idalia*; but afterwards enquiring her Name, Family, whither she had designed to go, and for what Reason so young a Maid had undertaken a Voyage, unaccompanied by any Friends or Relations, and other Particulars of her Life, the new-made *Slave* could make no other Reply than with her Tears; which the other perceiving, and knowing well by Experience to what Extreame Love can transport the Heart that owns his Power, and imagining by her Mein, and something of a grand Look about her, which no Disguise could rob her of, that she was of a Quality superior to what she was willing to confess,

would press her no farther at that Time; but desiring her to be as easy with her Fate as possible, and assuring her she should find nothing of Severity in her Servitude, commanded some of her other *Slaves* to place her in a Cabin, and leave her to that Repose which, 'twas probable, after the late Fright, the Danger of the Fight had put her in, she might stand in need of.

IN spite of the various Reflections this unhappy *Fair* had on this sudden and prodigious Alteration of her own Affairs, she could not forbear forgetting them a while, to contemplate on those of the Lady whom she must now call *Mistress*. It appeared so odd that a Woman, such as the Looks and Habit of *Bellraizia* spoke her to be, should be the willing Partaker of Dangers, Fatigues, and Horrors, such as were inseparable from the Profession of *Abdomar*, that she could not but think there was something very extraordinary in the Adventure: But her Surprise was very much heightened, when the next Morning she was summoned with the rest of the *Slaves* (who at several Times had been taken by *Abdomar*) to rise and attend the *Princess*; and she could not forbear asking the Person who brought her this Command some Questions concerning this Affair, but could learn no more from him, than that *Bellraizia* was of the Royal Blood of *Barbary*; and that for the Love of *Abdomar*, who was also of a high Extraction, though banished for some Misdemeanor, she had forsook her Country, and chose to live a Rover on that uncertain Element, despising all the Dangers of it for his Sake. This Information threw the poor *Idalia* into Anxieties much worse than her Captivity had inflicted on her;—the Passion she had for *Myrtano*, which her late Frights had silenced for a while, now rous'd itself within her Soul, and told her how happy might she have been, had he been true;—how joyfully she could have embraced *Bellraizia*'s Fate, had *Myrtano*, like *Abdomar*, been just. *Oh! had that lovely Youth* (cried she to herself) *returned my Passion with*

an equal Ardour, what is it I would not have endured? — what Dangers could I not have dared? — what Sufferings could I not with Joy have born to keep him mine? Pain would have been unfelt, Want lose its Sting, and even Death a Blessing for his sake! — My humble Wishes aspired no higher than to be wretched with Myrtano, — yet that the cruel Heavens deny! — Miserable Idalia! where, — where will thy Sorrows end? — The violent Agitations of her Soul oppress'd her here so strongly, that unable to repel their Force, she fell on the Bed she was sitting on entirely motionless; nor recovered she, till being a second time sent for by Bellraizia, and found in that Condition, all Means that could be invented were made use of for her Relief; and so extremely concerned was her generous Conqueror, and his admired Mistress, that they both joined in giving her a thousand Assurances of their Pity, and a Grant of whatever was in either of their Powers, to remedy the Misfortunes she laboured under: *If it be Captivity alone that makes you wretched,* said Bellraizia, *I dare promise you a Release as well from that Compassion which is natural to the noble Abdomar, as from the ready Compliance I have ever found in him to any Request of mine; be therefore comforted, for be assured whatever Pleasure I might take in retaining a Person whose Conversation I think so desirable as yours, I would not for the Universe have my Soul loaded with the Guilt of rendering you unhappy.* Idalia answered these obliging Expressions in Terms full of Gratitude and Respect; and the other taking an Opportunity of Abdomar's being gone out of the Cabin on some Business which called him on Deck, entreated her, if it were not too great a Secret, to relate the Particulars of her Life. This was not a Task so easy to be performed as she imagined; there were some Passages which were an Offence to her Modesty to remember, much more to repeat; and others, which the Description of would add to her Affliction, by suffering again in Idea what she had before in Reality: However, the Obligations she had to Bellraizia,

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and

and the Impossibility there was of denying any thing to a Person who asked with so good a Grace, surmounted all these Scruples, and she recounted to her both who she was, how she had been betrayed from her Father's House by the Perfidiousness of *Flores*, the Violence that had been offered to her by Don *Ferdinand*, the unhappy Quarrel between him and *Henriquez*, their Deaths, her Passion for *Myrtano*, the Terrors she had endured in the Apprehension of a second Violation from him, and afterwards the unknown Person appointed for her Guide, and this last of *Rickamboll*, from which the Victory of *Abdomar* had so unfortunately delivered her.

THIS Story, had it been told by any other Person, and stripped of all those grief-attracting Illustrations which heightened each unlucky Accident in *Idalia's* Description, was in itself too moving not to excite the tenderest Compassion in the Soul of her who heard it. *Abdomar* at his Return found them both drowned in Tears; which enquiring the Reason of, *That* (replied the Charmer of his Soul) *which when you are acquainted with, will very near bring you into our Condition; your beautiful Prisoner's Misfortunes, — she has been giving me an Account so full of Wonder, that when you hear it, as with her Leave some other Time you shall, I know you will join in my Belief, that Heaven designs her for some extraordinary Event.* The afflicted *Idalia* would have made some Return to these Words, but was too much overcome by her Disorders, and entreated the Liberty of retiring to the Cabin appointed for her. The obliging *Bellraiz* would needs accompany her, and was so assiduous in her Endeavours to assuage her Sorrow, that the other, if in reality she found no Consolation, thought herself bound in Gratitude and Complaisance to seem as if she did. As they were talking, she happened to let fall some Words which discovered a Desire of knowing the Adventures of a Lady, whom she esteemed so infinitely happy in the Society of the Man she loved. 'Tis a general Observation (said she)

she) that those Things we place our chief Felicity in, are the farthest from our Reach, it being the Sport of adverse Fate, to wound us in the tenderest Part: But you, Madam, and the noble Abdomar, are a blest Exception to that Rule, and having all in one another, can know no second Wish. 'Tis true, replied Bellraizia, we are at last as happy as Love can make us; but did you know the Toils, the Dangers, the Endurings we have had, — the unintermitting Cares, incessant Fears, and little Hopes, which, in the Race of Passion, both accompanied, you'd be surprized that either of us lived to reach the Goal: And because I know not but it may alleviate a Despair I see is beginning to take Root in you, to hear that there are no Misfortunes so great but Heaven can relieve us from, I shall, if you desire it, let you into the most secret History of mine. Idalia immediately told her there was not a Possibility of her conferring a greater Obligation; — that it was a Favour she had been ambitious of since the first Moment she was brought before her; and that having now so favourable an Opportunity of their being alone, begged she would make use of it for that Purpose. To which Bellraizia willingly complying, began to entertain her with what she desired, in this Manner:

The History of Abdomar and Bellraizia.

IN the little Time, said she, you have been in our Ship, you may, perhaps, have heard of what Country I am a Native, and doubtless are surprized to see my Complexion so different from others born in the same Climate; but to ease you of that Wonder, I must let you know the first of my Family that settled in *Barbary* was a Renegado Christian, a *Florentine*, nearly ally'd to the Great Duke of *Tuscany*, and General of his Forces; who, quitting his Service on some Disgust, brought his Family to *Barbary*, renounced his Religion, and was promoted. A sudden War breaking out, he signalized himself by
many

many remarkable Actions, and at his Return was made Governor of a Province, in which Post he died. Great Revolutions afterwards happening, a Son of his was advanc'd to the Dignity of *Bassaw*; and in Length of Time, and, to them, an auspicious turn of Fortune, a Descendant of his to the *Crown*, under an annual Tribute to the Emperor of *Morocco*, my Father's Brother is at present King, and the fifth Monarch of our Race. I make you not this Relation as a Boast of my Pedigree, but as it is necessary, to render other Occurrences plain to your Observation; for had my Birth been meaner, my Lot had been more bless'd; Grandeur has only given me an adequate Portion of Inquietudes; and Fate, by placing me in so elevated a State, had no other Design in it, than to make me more remarkably unhappy. My Uncle having but one Daughter, obliged my Father to let me be bred with her at Court, for a Companion in all her Diversions; and with our Years there grew so tender a Friendship between us, as is very rarely to be found in Persons of the same Sex: Neither of us had a Desire, tho' never so violent, that we could not resign for the Gratification of the other: If Joy or Sorrow sat on the Face of *either*, you might be certain to find it in the *other's* also. Thus, blessed with that Tranquillity which is always inseparable to those who are possess'd of Innocence and Freedom, did we live, till *Love*! — that sweet destructive Passion! that luscious Poisoner of the Calm of Life! changed that felicitous State for Cares, Inquietudes, and unceasing Perturbations!

THE King of *Fez* had a Son esteemed the Wonder of his Age: His martial Exploits had justly made him famous over all that Quarter of the World; nor was his soft Address, and elegant Behaviour, less charming to his Friends, than his undaunted Fierceness was dreadful to his Enemies. — I know not what ill Star inclined him to make a Visit at our Court; but he had no sooner arrived there, and cast his Eyes on me, than he became enamoured. I, who at that Time had a Heart entirely unprepossess'd, and was not with-

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out some Share of that Vanity by which most of our Sex, more or less, are sway'd, could not listen to the Declarations he made me, without an adequate Proportion of Pride and Pleasure, for being capable of inspiring a Prince so every way agreeable with a Passion such as he professed. My Uncle, who truly loved me, extremely approved of the Proposals he made, and my Father thought himself so much honoured by them, that he laid the strictest Command on me to treat *Mulyzedon* (for that was his Name) as a Prince, to whose Professions of Love I was infinitely obliged. Never was Lover indulged, on all Sides, with so many Opportunities of expressing his Passion, yet was he not contented: He was always complaining, that not all the Sollicitations he made were effectual to inspire me with Sentiments such as he wished: — He tormented himself with a Belief, that the Deference I paid him, was wholly owing to his Quality, and the Commands my Uncle and Father had given me: — He never saw me without telling me he found it impossible to make me love him; but one Day he seemed so uneasy, and indeed so desperate at my Insensibility, as he called it, that I thought he was distracted. For my Part, I believed I loved him: I had never seen a Man whose Merits I could think equal to those he was Master of; — was perfectly pleased when in his Company; and on the strictest Examination into my own Heart, could find in it not the least Scruple at becoming his Wife, which Title I had consented to wear, as soon as the necessary Preparations to confer it on me could be got ready. — I did not fail to acquaint him with the most favourable of my Inclinations; but all I could say, was insufficient to give him the Consolation I wish'd: — He still accused me of Coldness. Nor indeed is it to be wondered at, that he did so: For, alas! he perceived nothing in me of those tender Languors, — those melting Softnesses, — those pleasing Pains, — those thrilling Ardours, — those mingled Hopes and Fears, which still accompany Desire, and are never
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at an End, till sure Possession cuts them off, — those thousand, thousand, nameless Consequences of eager Passion, which he felt, and could easily distinguish, and which I since have too powerfully experienc'd! — But at that Time, I was utterly ignorant what it was he meant whenever he named them to me, and began to think him unreasonable to ask greater Proofs of my Affection, than what I imagined was in the Power of any Woman to give. — Perceiving I grew angry at these kind of Discourses, he at length forbore them; but in doing so, put so great a Constraint on his Inclinations, as, could I have had any Notion of what I now am certain he suffered, would have made me endure almost as much thro' *Pity*, as he did from an Agitation more violent. But not to tire you with the Particulars of our Behaviour till the Day appointed for the Celebration of our Nuptials was arrived, which had not been so long delay'd, but for the expected coming of a young Nobleman of *Fez*, one who from his Infancy had been brought up with *Mulyzeden*, as I had with the Princess my Cousin, and so firmly united were they in Friendship, that fearing *Marriage* might some Time or other occasion a *Slack'ning*, if not a total *Breach* of that Bond which both desired should be *indissoluble*, each had taken an Oath never to wed, but with the Approbation of the other. *Mulyzeden* had so sacred a Regard to his Promise in this Affair, that as soon as he had obtained mine and my Parent's Consent to make me his, he dispatched a Messenger to *Fez* with an Account of the Progress he had made, and entreating the Presence of this dear *Favourite*. The other was not neglectful of the Duty he owed to his Prince and Friend, but set out for *Barbary* the Moment he was recovered of some slight Wounds, which had been the Cause of his staying behind him, as to avoid marrying a Lady whom his Father had provided for him, was of *Mulyzeden's* coming away. It was Evening when he came to *Court*, and being engaged with the Princess, I saw him not that Night. I had observed an unusual

usual Melancholy in that young Princess; but the complaining of a little Indisposition in her Head, made me impute it to that, and prevented my taking so much Notice of it, as otherwise I should have done; but the News of the Prince's Favourite's Arrival being blazed about the Court, she sent for me immediately. I found her on the Bed in such an Agony of Grief, that I should but lessen it in an Endeavour to represent it. — It was a good while before she was able to speak to me, though she attempted it several Times, and it was with the utmost Difficulty she at last brought out these Words: — *Pity me! pity me, Bellraiza!* — *Dearest Cousin, pity me!* — She would have proceeded, but the struggling Passions of her Soul stopped her Utterance, and Sighs, accompanied with a Torrent of Tears, had alone the Power of Informing me she laboured under some very great Affliction. The Surprise I was in to see her in this Manner, did not hinder me from endeavouring to console her; but when I entreated her to reveal what it was disturbed her, she seemed possessed with an Addition of Disquiet. *Press me no more* (said she, with a Countenance which, without the Help of Words, sufficiently expressed the Distress of her Soul) *the Misfortune I am fallen under, nor Earth, nor Heaven can relieve me from: — Why then should I afflict you with the Knowledge of it?* The Accent in which she spoke this, touched me to the Heart: I tenderly loved her, and could not bear to see her thus, and be ignorant of the Cause: I fell on my Knees by the Bed-side, and kissing her Hand, and bathing it in my Tears, which now fell fast as her's, conjured her by all the Friendship she had favoured me with, to let me into the cruel Secret of her Sorrows. — *I cannot, — must not, — dare not tell you,* answered she. *O Heavens!* interrupted I, *what can have happened to Zatilda* (for that was her Name) *that Bellraizia must not know?* Nay (continued I) *I think you said you dare not speak it; — and I have just Cause to fear you doubt my Truth, if longer you refuse to give me leave to join with you in your*
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Complainings. No, no (resumed she, hastily) you have no Cause to mourn. — Fate is about to give you all you can desire; therefore I'll not detain you from the dear Presence of the Prince who adores you, and whom justly you esteem: — I sent for you but to take my last Farewell, for he assured I'll not out-live this Night: No (pursued she, raising her Eyes to Heaven, as though she meant to accuse the Gods for her Misfortunes) no, I ne'er will live to see To-morrow's hated Dawn, — this Night shall put an End to cursed Zatilda's Misery and Shame. It would be impossible for me to express either my Confusion at the first Part of her Discourse, or the Agonies I felt at the Resolution which she closed it with: — The sudden Tremblings which seized her, and the visible Alteration in her Countenance when she named the Prince, gave me some little faint *Idea*, that it was he who had been so fatal to her Repose, and in so surprising a Juncture was not Mistress of Presence enough of Mind to be able to resolve in what Manner I should reply. — While I was pausing, she had been endeavouring to recollect herself; and perhaps believing she had said too much, was willing to break off any farther Conversation, — *I see*, cried she, *I see* (with an Infinity of Concern for having occasioned it) how nearly the Despair you find me in has touched you. Pardon it, I beseech you, my dear Bellraizia! 'tis the last Trouble you will ever receive from the unfortunate Zatilda: — Remember me, I conjure you (added she, tenderly pressing my Hand) and when you are possessed of all your Soul is fond of in Mulyzedén's Court, think he cannot love you more than I have done! — And then (perceiving I was silent, for indeed I had not yet the Power of Speech, so much had Amazement locked up all my Senses) Go (continued she) I will no longer afflict you with the Sight of Woe, it is not in your Power to remedy: Go, go, and be blessed with Mulyzedén! The Hesitation with which she still pronounced that Name, confirmed me that my Conjectures had but too real a Foundation; and at last getting

getting Leave from the Whirl of Thought which that Belief had at the first involved me in, *It is not in Nature* (answered I) *for Bellraizia to know what Felicity is, when Zatilda refuses to be Partaker of it; that Prince you speak of, deserving as he is, had never the Power to rival you in my Affections; — nor shall my Uncle, my Father, his ardent Passion, or my own Vow, oblige me to become his Wife, if you approve not of it.* She would by some faint Arguments have perswaded me to believe, there was nothing she more desired than to see me Princess of Fex; but she was so little accustomed to Hypocrisy, that I easily distinguished her Heart was far from assenting to what her Tongue had uttered, and that all the Pains she took, was but to disguise a Truth her Modesty could not suffer her to with disclosed. But I, who was not able to bear to see, much less to leave her in this Anxiety, pressed her so home, that at length I wrested the Secret from her Breast, and found it as I imagined. I had several Messages from *Mulyzedan*, while I was employed in comforting her, to let me know, that this long-expected Friend was now arrived, and that they both waited at my Appartment; but I still sent Excuses, and at last a plain Denial, that I would not be seen that Night. The King being told of his Daughter's Indisposition, came also into her Chamber; and seeing me there, told me the Prince of Fex depended on the Performance of my Promise of marrying him the next Day. To which I answered, that with his Majesty's Permission, I would defer it till the Princess *Zatilda* should be enough recovered to be Witness of the Ceremony. He seemed obliged at the Concern I expressed for her, and told me, That if my Father and the Prince would be so content, he would not oppose what I desired. *Zatilda* looked on me while I was speaking in this Manner to her Father, with a Mixture of Astonishment and Joy, but durst not express any Part of what she thought before him, lest the Secret should be as liable to his Suspicion, as she knew it had been to mine: But the Moment he had left

left the Room, demanded of me impatiently what it was I meant, by requesting to delay the Marriage. I mean, said I, *by protracting, to shift it off entirely.*—*How!* (cried she, with a Voice which expressed the highest Transport) *is it then possible you do not love him! Not half enough to make you unhappy* (replied I) To repeat the thousand Acknowledgments, the Kisses, the Embraces, she gave me at this Declaration, would but tire you; it shall suffice to say the Night was taken up with them, and the Study what Means should be made use of to disappoint *Mulyzedon* of his Hopes of me, and turn the Course of his Affections where they were with more Zeal desired. We had a thousand Inventions, but none seemed plausible enough to be approved, and the enamoured Princess was obliged to content herself with the repeated Assurances, that neither Force nor Entreaty should prevail on me to make her miserable by my yielding to be his Wife; and leave to Time and Chance to work for her, in changing the Sentiments he had for me to her Advantage.

WHEN Morning came, I left her in a much better Condition of Repose than that in which I had found her, and retired to my own Appartment not a little satisfied to have an Opportunity of reflecting on what I had done. The Advantage I proposed to myself in being the Wife of a Prince so accomplished as *Mulyzedon*, was too great for me to think of quitting without some Concern; and the Promise which my Love to *Zatilda* had obliged me to make her of doing so, I foresaw would be very difficult for me to make good: I very well knew, that my Father would fly into the utmost Extremity of Rage against me, when once he should find an Intention in me to oppose his Inclinations. Besides, I could not help having some little Commiseration for a Prince who loved me with so high a Degree of Passion, that the Loss of me might probably deprive him of his Life. As I was revolving on this Manner, my Page brought me Word he waited for Admittance: I was sensible he

must

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must have heard of the Petition I had made the King the Night before, for delaying the Nuptials till *Zatilda's* Recovery, and expected he would reproach the little Regard I shewed for him, with as much Vehemence as his Respect would give him Leave; but as *that* would be the most plausible, nay, indeed, the *only* Pretence I could make, I resolved to have Recourse to no other. I found I was not mistaken: The Moment he entered the Room, I read in his Eyes the Discontent of his Soul; and though he approached me with the most perfect Humility, yet there was something in his Air which told me, before he spoke, that he thought himself ill treated. I had little to say in Vindication of what I had done, since if I had really been possessed of that Warmth of Passion he had endeavoured to inspire, and which I had often feigned to make him easy, no Consideration would have been of Force to have engaged me to break the Promise I had made of being his, the very Moment that his Friend was arrived. Besides, the *Princess's* Indisposition was looked upon so slight, that (as Lovers are always industrious to torment themselves) he imagined it was by my Desire she only counterfeited it, on purpose to give me an Excuse for delaying what I had no Inclination to perform. He expressed himself on this Head in Terms so moving, and complained of my Indifference, and the cruel Pleasure I took in making him unhappy, that though I was farther from a Passion for him, than, till I knew what 'twas to *love* in Reality, I was sensible of my self, yet I had a Softness in my Soul which gave me Agonies inexpressible, for being obliged by so severe a Necessity to reduce him to such Despair: But to palliate the Matter as well as I could, I told him, as he was not ignorant of the Friendship which was between my *Cousin* and myself, he ought not to wonder I denied to receive what Fortune's Smiles would bestow on me, while she was unable to taste any Joy. — I assured him she was in a much worse Condition than was generally believed; and finding nothing else

would be of Force to perswade him to Moderation, was obliged to renew the Vows I had before made him, of being his for ever, as soon as she was restored to her former Health. Unhappy *Prince*! he little suspected the Equivocation of these Words, which when I spoke, I knew would be but little to his Advantage; for I resolved she should continue to feign herself as she was, till something should happen to give a Turn to this Affair. He appeared a little more satisfied than he had been, however; and when he was so, told me, the young Nobleman being now arrived, attended my Permission to kiss my Hands. I, who had as much Curiosity to see a Person I had heard so much of, as the Chagrin I was in would allow Room for, desired he might be immediately introduced:— But, O Gods! with what Emotions did my Bosom swell when first I cast my Eyes upon him!— I will not go about to represent what 'twas I felt,— 'twould be impossible!— But you, lovely *Idalia*! who have so much experienced what Passion is, may guess. — Besides, in my fond Judgment, whoever has seen the graceful Form of *Abdomar*, for it was no other, cannot be surpris'd to hear the Effect it wrought on me. How mean, methought, did *Mulzyeden* seem! how little in comparison with his charming Friend! The Disorder I had been in, while talking to the Prince, served to screen that additional one which seized me at the Sight of the adorable Stranger, from the Observation of them both; for the former took it for no other than what was occasioned by Reflection on what has been said to me; and the latter, as he has since told me, for a Look that was natural to me: He found enough in it, however, to think agreeable; and it is certain, that at this first View, the God of soft Desires fixed his Arrows in both our Hearts at once: But alas! I was not so happy to imagine I had made any Impression on him, and Love was scarce a Moment older than Despair. — It was now that I began to pity poor *Zatilda*'s Case, for having entertained a Passion for a Prince, who seemed so little in a Capacity of returning

turning it, much more than was in my Power to do before I felt the same. It is not to be expressed, it is not to be imagined, what I endured while they were present; but (much for my Ease, who longed for an Opportunity of indulging the new Sentiments I was possessed with) they stayed not long, perhaps thinking a Morning Visit might be troublesome, especially to a Person who, that they might do so, had informed them she took but little Repose the Night before. But, oh! how little do they know their Passion's Force, who think to conquer it, by reflecting on the Difficulties that are likely to oppose it! — All that might be inflicted on me from the Indignation of my Royal Uncle, my Father, or the just Resentment of the injured *Mulyzedon*, seemed light to me, if by my Sufferings I could purchase the least Share in his Affections, who was now dearer to me than the whole World besides. — But the most, and indeed the *only* dreadful Consideration was, that should he ever guess at the Inclinations I had for him, he would be so far from thinking himself obliged to them, that he would rather hate me for the Ingratitude I was guilty of to a *Prince* he so infinitely loved. I thought myself now in a much worse Condition than *Zatilda* was, because I had not only the Weight of my own Troubles to support, but was also loaded with those my ill Fate obliged me to inflict on *Mulyzedon*, whom, though it was not my Destiny to love, I could not but have a very tender Regard for. And sure, never was a Soul so torn as mine: I saw the two Persons, for whom I had the greatest Friendship, about to be reduced to the last Degree of Misery on my Account; the one because I did not love him, and the other because I was beloved; while I myself vainly struggled with the Violence of a Passion which I had then no more Hopes of being successful in, than I had of being able to overcome it. Confused and wild with these different Agitations, my Brain grew giddy, and Apprehension such a Torment, that I could no longer bear it: I flew to *Zatilda's*

zilda's Appartment, and found some little Ease in pouring out my Discontents on the Bosom of that faithful Friend. She, who besides the Kindness she ever had for me, thought herself so infinitely obliged to me, for the Promise I had made of resigning my Right in *Mulyzedon* to her, did all she could to give me Consolation; but though she truly commiserated my unhappy State, yet I could easily perceive she was not so much dissatisfied, as she pretended, at the Relation I made her how much I was influenced by the Charms of *Abdomar*. Nor indeed was it natural to believe she should, since this new Passion was a more convincing Assurance that I would never be the Wife of *Mulyzedon*, than all the Vows I had made. It afforded, however, but a very small Portion of Contentment to either of us to know we were not Rivals in the same Affections, since such indissoluble Difficulties appeared to oppose both our Wishes, as left us not the least room to hope either would be able to obtain them.

FOR several Days *Zatilda*, as we had agreed, still keeping her Chamber: Her Indisposition was a tolerable Excuse for my putting off the Nuptials; but the Physicians appointed to attend her, giving in their Verdict that she was in Reality afflicted with no other Disease than Melancholy, not only my Father and *Mulyzedon*, who, for different Reasons, had all this while been sufficiently impatient, but also the King began to exert his Authority, and told me, that neither my Daughter's, nor his own ill Humour, should any longer be a Pretence for affronting a Prince, whose Alliance was an Honour to all our Family. Judge what a Blow this was! — what a Crush to our Resolutions! — *Zatilda*, as soon as she was informed of it, cried out, *I am undone!* — in spite of all you have promised me, in spite of your own distant Inclinations, you will be forced to be the Prince's Wife! I was no less distracted, for Death would now have been less dreadful to me than *Mulyzedon's* Bed; yet, by what Means I should avoid it, without a plain Denial,

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nial, and boldly daring the Rage of all those who had the Power over me, I could not, for the Soul of me, imagine. But *Passion*, when it is violent like mine, is never unaccompanied by *Courage*: I resolved rather to defy all Dangers, than yield to an Embrace, which even the *Idea* of was now grown odious, or make my dear *Zatilda* wretched, by utterly depriving her of even a Possibility of ever being otherwise. We pass'd our Hours for the most part together, not only because to talk of our mutual Misfortunes was all the Consolation that either of us enjoy'd, but also because I would avoid the Presence of *Mulyzeden* as much as possible; not but he sometimes visited her, but then he always sent to desire to know if he might have Permission, and I took care to retire into another Room, and by that Means escaped the Persecution it was to me to hear his Complaints. This I did so often, and he being told by some of the Attendants that I was there, tho' he had not the Liberty of seeing me, that one Day he took an effectual Method to prevent me from concealing myself as I had done, without being guilty of a Rudeness unbecoming my Character:— He sent a Gentleman with his Duty to the two Princesses, who he knew were together, entreating the Favour of them to continue so, and allow of his Presence, having something to communicate to them both. My Cousin and I look'd on one another, while this Message was delivering, with a good deal of Surprize; but it being her Place to answer, she did in these Words: *Let your Prince know, said she, that I should take it ill if he should have so indifferent an Opinion of my Judgment, as not to assure himself of Welcome here, whenever he has a leisure Hour to afford us his Conversation. — As for my Cousin, he is doubtless satisfied in her Inclinations. —* Madam (interrupted I, affecting a gay Air) *if he is not, I know of no Person on Earth so proper to complain to as yourself, who, on all Occasions, are so much his Friend.* I spoke this, because I knew that though he extremely respected her before, yet, since my deser-

ring the Marriage, he had conceived a secret Spite against her, as imagining, though for what Reason he could not dive into, she had been the Cause. And then addressing myself to the Person he had sent, told him, he might inform his Master, he had seen me with the *Princess*, where I designed to remain some Time, and should be very well pleased if he would come and join Company with us; which he assuring us he would do immediately, withdrew.

BOTH *Zatilda* and myself were of Opinion, that the Business he had to communicate was no other than the old Story of my Unkindness, and growing more presuming, on the Part which the *King* seem'd to take in his Interest, sent in this particular Manner on purpose to oblige me to give him Audience, which of late, as I have already told you, I had avoided as much as possible. *Zatilda* was beginning to consider in what Manner she should answer him, in case he should desire her, as she imagin'd he would, to interest herself in this Affair, when he enter'd the Room: After the first Civilities were over, *Madam*, said he to me, *I have Reason to believe that Fortune having began her Persecutions to me in your cruel Coldness, designs to continue them in depriving me of every thing which could afford me Consolation: Abdomar, that Friend, whom next to the adorable Bellraizia had the greatest Share in my Heart, of late avoids my Presence, shuns my Caresses, and when I ask the Cause, replies not but with Sighs. This Morning, pressing with all the Earnestness of Friendship, to which I joyn'd Commands, to know what had occasion'd this so sudden Change, after a thousand Evasions, which he found were vain, he told me with an Account which spoke at once Despair, and Grief, and Horror, his Life was mine, but not this Secret. I thought this Answer as far from Justice, as it was from Kindness, and let him know I had not been guilty of those Reserves to him, which, between Souls united, as I had believed ours, were treasonable to the Laws of Friendship. Our Tempers, both too liable to Passion, a few hot*
Words

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Words enflam'd, and he departed from my Chamber. This Usage, tho' it much troubles me, I could forgive from *Abdomar*; but he, it seems, is not so reconcileable. About an Hour since he sent a Letter by his *Page*, which please to judge his Meaning of. In speaking these Words, he delivered me the Paper, which, at his Desire, I read aloud. The Contents of it struck me too deeply not to be fix'd in my Remembrance, and were in this Manner:

To Prince MULYZEDEN.

MY Presence being no way serviceable to you in Barbary, and the Repose of my future Life calling me with the utmost Expedition to Fez, I humbly entreat your Permission to return thither. I know better what is owing to my Duty, and the Obligations you have heaped upon me, than to oppose your Will; but hope the same Goodness, to which I already stand so far engaged, will influence you not to command my Stay, since my immediate Departure is absolutely necessary to prevent me from being

The most miserable of your Slaves,

ABDOMAR.

THE Concern which this unexpected Shock gave me, and which was impossible for me wholly to conceal, was not a little obliging to the unsuspecting *Mulyzedén*, who imagin'd it sprung only on his Account, especially when I told him, That I thought it the highest Piece of Ingratitude imaginable; and that he would be blam'd by the whole World for his too great Condescension, if he granted the Request he made: *What*, said I, *has he found so disobliging in the Court of Barbary, that should make him so impatient to remove from it? Or what Engagements can he have left behind him in Fez equal to those he has to his Prince, who*

has

has bought his utmost Services at a Price so noble as his Friendship. *Zatilda* joined in all I said on this Score; but *Mulyzeden*, who, in spite of his Resentment, had the most tender Friendship for him imaginable, tho' he could not but approve of our Reasons, could not be influenced by them so far as to force his Stay, if Persuasions would not win him. After a long Conversation he told me, he had a Favour to entreat of me, the Grant of which would infinitely oblige him; which having assur'd him I would, if in my Power, he inform'd me, That he believ'd it would not be improper if I seem'd a little interested in this Affair, and took upon me to enquire of *Abdomar* the Reasons of his Desire to leave us. *Perhaps*, said he, *his Complaisance for a Princess of your Accomplishments may influence him to reveal more than I have been able to draw from him.* You may believe I did not hesitate much to promise what he desir'd: I was not a little satisfied to have an Opportunity of conversing so freely with *Abdomar*; and beginning to know what Jealousy inflicts, fancying it could be no other Reason than the Calls of Love, which made him regardless of every thing beside, presently flatter'd myself with a secret Hope I should be able to discover something by his Words or Gestures which would give me Colour for opposing his Return. — I granted the Request which *Mulyzeden* made me with a Willingness which seem'd to banish Part of his Chagrin; and telling me he would send no Answer to *Abdomar* till I had first spoke to him, took his Leave with a Satisfaction much greater than I had seen in his Countenance since the Time of my first putting off the Marriage: But when his Absence had given me an Opportunity, how did I indulge Despair and Jealousy! how did I reproach *Zatilda* for accusing her ill Fate, since my own appeared by such infinite Degrees more dreadful! tho' as every one looks on their own Misfortunes through a magnifying Glass, she could not be brought to yield me the Pre-eminence. Good part of the Night was pass'd in this kind

kind of Conversation, and the Remainder in contemplating on the Intricacy of this Affair, which, indeed, from the Beginning, promis'd nothing but Confusion. For my part, it had been many Nights since I knew what it was to sleep in Tranquillity, but having this added to my other Disquiets, of losing, in all Probability, for ever the Sight of all I wish'd to look on, fill'd me with such mortal Agonies, as the most elegant Description of would make appear but mean in Comparison of what in reality they were. Tir'd with my uneasy Bed, I rose much earlier than was my Custom; and because I would avoid the Morning Salutations which the *Court* thought it their Duty to pay me, and which, with all other Formalities of State, were now grown troublesome, I went into the Palace-Garden without any Attendants, leaving Orders with them not to tell Prince *Mulyzeden*, my Father, or any other Person, were I was. It was not a Time for the Walks to be frequented, and I rambled up and down without being accosted by any one, till growing a little weary, I went into a Grotto, which was order'd so, as to have many little Appartments in it, which run winding one out of another like a Labyrinth, and might entertain several Companies without being known by each other to be there. I was scarce set down, before I heard a murmuring Sound of Voices, that seem'd earnest in Discourse; but whose they were, or what was the Subject of their Conversation, I was not able to distinguish. It is impossible for any one to be less inquisitive into the Affairs of others than I am at all Times, but especially then, when I was so much taken up, and perplex'd with my own: I sat for some Moments without so much as a Thought what they might be, till one of them raising his Voice somewhat higher than he had done, I heard the Name of *Abdomar* repeated. That Sound, indeed, was sufficient to rouse me from a Lethargy, had I been in one. I left the Place I was in, and drawing nearer as softly as I could, soon found it was

no other than he, whom Prince Mulyzedon had drawn thither on purpose to engage him to disclose the Secret he had been so desirous of knowing; for presently I heard him speak these Words: Say no more, Abdomar (said he) say no more: I am now convinced that all the Friendship thou ever pretendest to me, was but to flatter me; — the Names of Prince, Patron, Friend, but Words of Course, and had no other Meaning than to please me with the Sound. Sir, I conjure you, do not rend my Soul (replied Abdomar) with such unjust Suspicions; by Heaven, by all that we adore above, or love below, your Friendship is the only Pride, the only Joy, the only Hope, I have on Earth; and when I forfeit that, I must be curs'd beyond my Enemies extremest Malice. Why then (resum'd the Prince) dost thou conceal this Secret from me? No, I never will believe thou lovest me, till I obtain this Proof. — I know too well thy honest generous Nature to imagine it can be ought thou would'st be asham'd to own; but if it were, to me thou might'st disclose it. — Humanity is liable to Failings, and if some stealing Vice has unawares crept into thy unguarded Wishes, I shall not censure it with such Severity as thou thyself would'st do, having far more, and greater of my own. — O Sir, forbear (cry'd the other) you are too God-like good, — your wond'rous Condescension to an unworthy slave makes me more hateful to myself. — Believe it, my most honour'd Prince, the Crime you would discover, is of so black a Kind, you cou'd not know it without Detestation: This once favour'd Abdomar, by you and by all Mankind must be contemn'd, abhorr'd; and if there were a Punishment more terrible, that, that wou'd be inflicted on me. Thy Words (interrupted Mulyzedon) amazing as they are, can never make me think thou could'st be guilty of a Crime I cou'd not pardon. Hadst thou conspir'd against my Life, half this Penitence would more than wash the Stain: — But I will no farther press thee, keep still the Secret in thy burden'd Breast, but let me keep thee with me: Do not leave me, and I will ask no more. O unjust Gods (cry'd Abdomar,

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in a Voice that testified the utmost Horror) *why am I made this Wretch? — why doom'd to bear more than a mortal Sufferance can sustain? — why am I forc'd, against my Inclinations, to wrong such Royal Goodness? — Strike, strike me dead with your avenging Thunders! — Lightnings blast me! — Earth open wide, and swallow me at once! — Snatch, snatch me, Fiends, and bear me quick to Hell! — There's not a Devil there so damn'd as I! — But hold* (continu'd he) *these Coward-like Complaints avail not to erase my foul Ingratitude, my horrid Perjury: — I have the Means myself to end my Tortures, and chastise my Crimes. Thus, thus, my Prince, I will revenge you on your worst of Foes.*

WITH these Words, as I was afterwards inform'd, he drew a Dagger from his Side, and was about to plunge it in his Breast; but *Mulyzedon*, who, by the Beginning of those Exclamations, guess'd they would not cease without some Act of Desperation, was quick enough to prevent him; and wresting from him the fatal Weapon, spoke in a low and melancholy Accent, yet loud enough for me to understand what he said, in this Manner: *It is enough, Abdomar, it is enough; I need no more to make me guess at your Misfortune; — I am too well assur'd of your Honour to believe you wou'd injure a Prince who loves you, by any Act in which your Will had part: — No, no, the Crime which has occasion'd this Despair, is an involuntary one. — There are no Rules, alas! to limit Love, and I must learn to be insensible of Bellraizia's Charms myself, before I refuse my Pity to another, who has felt their Influence. Tho' I listen'd with all the Attention I was able, I cou'd not hear one Word after this for the Space of several Minutes; and when I did, it was in such broken Sentences, that had I not heard the Beginning of their Conversation, I cou'd have form'd no positive Judgment to what the latter Part of it tended, till *Mulyzedon*, who I found was about to leave him, spoke as he went out of the Grotto in this Manner: Well, Abdomar, said he, *I shall no more disturb you in the Enjoyment of a Solitude which you prefer**

prefer to the Society of a Prince who loves you; only remember this, That there is a mighty Difference between Crimes enforced by a compulsive Fate, and those which we are guilty of meerly thro' the Obstinacy of our own Will: The unhappy Passion you lament, is not your Fault, but your Misfortune; but if you offer to lay violent Hands on your own Life, you not only anticipate the Decrees of Heaven, but injure me in the most tender Part, by depriving me of a Subject I esteem the most capable of serving me, and commit a Sin unpardonable both by the Gods and me. By good Luck for me, who should have been strangely confus'd, had either the Prince or *Abdomar* known I had been Witness of this Discourse, the former went from the Grotto through another Passage, which led to a lower Garden, leaving that I was in entirely free for me to retire, which I did, with all the Expedition I could, fearing lest *Abdomar*, who I found still continu'd where he was, should come out hastily and discover me. I walk'd a Turn or two in a fine green Alley adjoining to it, ruminating on what had past: — I cannot but say, it was with an Infinity of Transport that I was eas'd of those Rackings of Jealousy which I had endured since I heard of his Impatience to return to *Fez*, and that so contrary to my Hopes and Expectations, he felt the same tumultuous Emotions which Desire creates, as had invaded me from the first Moment *Mulyzedem* brought him to my Presence; but then the Goodness, the Generosity of that unhappy Prince, injur'd by those in whom he most confided, reproach'd me with Ingratitude and Falshood: The Sense of his Sufferings so truly touched me, that methought I could have done a Violence to my own Passion to have made him happy. — But then my Friendship to *Zatilda*, or I fancy'd it was that (because I was asham'd to own even to myself that Love had so far influenc'd me) which check'd the Growth of such an Inclination before I scarce could feel it rising in me. But to which of these two Motives it was my future Behaviour was owing, I will leave *Idalia* to the Liberty of judging.

I had not long indulg'd my Meditations before I saw close by me the Person who took up the greatest Part of them: The half-distracted *Abdomar*, with Head declin'd, and folded Arms, had left the *Grotto*, and was coming down the Walk in which I was; the Confusion of both our Thoughts had prevented us from seeing one another till we were very near. The Start he gave at discovering me, sufficiently assured me he met me not with Design, as did his offering, after he had made me a low Bow, to turn away into another Walk: But my Love inspired me, at that Time, with a Boldness which I have a thousand Times since wondered at; and presently remembering the Request *Mulyzedem* had made me the Day before, resolved to make that my Excuse for entertaining the Man, for a Moment of whose Conversation I could almost have hazarded my Life: And calling after him, — *My Lord*, said I, *you do very wisely in shunning the Presence of a Princess you are about so highly to disoblige. How! Madam* (cry'd the surpriz'd *Abdomar*, endeavouring as much as possible to throw off his Chagrin) *were there a Possibility of my being guilty of a Crime like that, I should deserve far worse than is in the Power of a Goodness so divine as yours to inflict, — but since you have tax'd me with it, permit me to entreat the Cause. The Cause is plain* (resum'd I, counterfeiting a Gaiety which was far from my Humour) *if Prince Mulyzedem has not wrong'd you in his Report, you grow weary of us, and are impatient to return to Fez. The short Time I have been here* (reply'd he gravely) *has shewn me so much to admire, that if there were a perfect Heaven to be found on Earth, it is in the Court of Barbary I should seek it; and 'tis so much my Misfortune, that I am oblig'd by an indispensable Necessity to leave it, that I much doubt it never will be in my Power to erase the Melancholy it occasions. Did you in reality think* (said I) *what your Complaisance obliges you to say, no Considerations would be of Force to take you from a Prince*

who cannot be happy when you are not with him. Abdomar did not immediately make any Answer to these Words; and I, who strictly observ'd all his Motions, perceiv'd this Pause was occasion'd by the Suppression of some Sighs which, endeavouring to vent themselves, had well nigh suffocated him; but having at last got the Victory over them, I am so little capable of being serviceable to my Prince, Madam (said he) on any Score, that without being guilty of an Injustice to himself, he cannot regret my Absence; — tho' if it were otherwise, he will soon be put in Possession of a Blessing which will leave no room for any second Wish: Whatever this World can boast, cannot be worth one Thought from him, who has all Heaven in the Divine Bellraizia! But till that Day, at least (answer'd I, smiling) you ought not to forsake him, and who can tell how long a Space of Time may be between this Instant now, and that? You look with Wonder in your Countenance (continu'd I, perceiving him surpriz'd) but knowing you so strictly devoted to your Prince, I long have wish'd to discourse you on this Theme, and should be more obliged than Words can thank you for, would you endeavour to divert his Thoughts from one who cannot love him, nor but with Horror unconceivable can ever yield to be his Wife. — Not love him, Madam (interrupted he) Grant Heaven my Ears deceive me! — not love a Prince who has all the Perfections that Man can boast! — a Prince who dies for you! and to whom you have given so many Assurances you would reward his Passion! — 'Twas by my Father's and the King's Commands (resum'd I) for know, my Heart had never part in what I said, nor shall their Power oblige me longer to disguise the Truth: I cannot love, and therefore will not consent to — Hold, Princess (cry'd the generous Abdomar, transported with Grief and Amazement) I conjure you by the Gods, recal that rash Resolve, which else too late Consideration will enforce you to repent: — Where, in the Race of Man, can there be found a Worth-like Mulyzeden's? — The strictest Honour,

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Honour, Justice, Truth, and Goodness, are the Ingredients of his God-like Soul ! Then for his Form, O Princess ! is it not noble ? — What a manly Majesty dwells in his Air ? What Sweetness in his Smiles ? — And with all this, a Love so true, so perfect, and so pure, that which the Bless'd above regard each other with, is scarce so free from Taint. Had I not been Witness of the Conversation which had lately pass'd between him and Mulyzeden, I should not have been surpriz'd to hear him plead in this Manner ; but knowing him his Rival, the Generosity of his Soul fill'd me with a Wonder equal to my Love ; and I must confess, tho' it was before at the greatest Height I then believ'd it could arrive, I felt from this Moment an Addition : But resolved to try him farther yet, I own the Merits of Prince Mulyzeden (said I coldly) but if you have ever been acquainted with that Passion, you well know that it is not without Reason that the God of it is painted blind, Ah ! Madam (interrupted he) can you confess the least Knowledge what it is to love, yet seem insensible of it for Mulyzeden's Charms ? But thus (continu'd he with an Accent which express'd the utmost Earnestness, and falling on his Knees) thus, most adorable Bellraizia ! let me entreat you to consider well, e'er you resolve to make my Prince unhappy — think what a Breach of Honour and of Justice it would be to throw him from those high-rais'd Hopes to which your Promises have exalted him ; — think he cannot out-live the cruel Certainty of your Unkindness, and if not Love, let Pity move you never to let this fatal Knowledge reach his Ear ; — for me, not all the Tortures which the Damn'd endure should force me to reveal it. — Nor, — nor need'st thou, Traitor (cry'd a Voice behind me) my Eyes and Ears have but too well inform'd themselves, and urge me thus to Vengeance. With the hearing these Words, I saw the Person who spoke them was no other than Prince Mulyzeden, who, returning to the Palace, had been Witness of the Posture Abdomar was in ; and drawing nearer as fast as he could, heard his

last Words; which unhappily misconstruing, transported him so far as to make him draw his Sword, before the other had Time to put himself in any Posture of Defence, had he design'd it; but he attempted it not, and making bare his Breast when the Prince run fiercely at him, had certainly bury'd the Weapon in his Heart, had I not interpos'd. Frighted and confus'd as I was, I sent forth a Shriek which might have reach'd a much greater Distance, than it was to the Centinels which were placed at the Garden Gates, and stepping between them, — *Check this rash Sally of an ungovern'd and a causeless Fury* (cry'd I to the Prince) *or thro' Bellraizja give the Wound.* You do well, Madam, answer'd he, *to defend the Man who has declared a Passion for you, I wish you had that Charity for all who love you.* Your Words (resum'd I) are too mysterious for me to comprehend the Meaning of, and all I can gather either from them, or your Behaviour, is to me affrontive, and to your Friend injurious. By this Time, there was a Crowd of Courtiers and Soldiers about us, and my Father, who happen'd to be just entring the Garden when I call'd out, came up among the rest: He had heard what I said to the Prince, and casting a furious Look at me, was about to speak, when Mulyzedden prevented him, by saying, Sir, *I desire you, whose Authority can justify the Act, as the Story I have to tell you will my Accusation, to order that Traitor* (pointing to Abdomar) *into close Confinement, till a worse Punishment is inflicting on him.* My Father immediately making a Sign to some of the Guard, they took him away, which he submitted to with all the Resignation imaginable. I durst not utter the least Word of that Indignation my Soul was full of to Mulyzedden, because of my Father's Presence; but he walking away with the Prince, who was impatient to disburden his Bosom of the Anguish he was possess'd of, I went to Zatilda's Apartment to communicate to her this Adventure, and ask her Advice which way I should proceed; but I had

had scarce Time to recount it to her, before I receiv'd a Message from the *King* to retire to my own Side, and not to stir from thence without Permission. — Both the *Princess* and myself were extremely startled at this unexpected Mission ; but the Person who brought it not leaving the Chamber till I went with him, neither of us had Opportunity to express what we thought.

AFTER I was conducted to my Apartment, I found it was my Prison ; the Persons who waited on me were order'd to admit no Persons without a particular Licence, nor deliver any Letter or Message for me without other Orders than my own. Incens'd to the greatest Vehemence my Temper could be rais'd to, at hearing this Command, I entreated to see my *Father* ; but was told his Rage against me was too violent to permit me to come into his Presence, till he could bear it with more Calmness. —

As the charming *Bellraizja* was in this Part of her Story, she was interrupted by the sudden rising of a Storm, which express'd the utmost Fury of the warring Elements : At first with distant Roar the whistling Winds but threaten'd Danger, but soon the dreadful Noise came nearer ; from every Quarter of the angry Heavens the Tempest seem'd to blow, and demanded the Pilot's utmost Skill and Care : But soon there was no use of either ; the horrible Hurricane baffled the Sailor's Art, and those who were adventurous enough to aim at stemming it, paid dearly for their vain Attempt. — At length, Masts, Cables, Rudder, all that could be defensive being lost, the Ship was tost about at Pleasure of the mounting Waves, which sometimes bore it almost to the Skies, and sometimes dash'd it down so low, that those that were abroad had little Hope of rising. — A vast Variety of Horror might here be seen and heard, Numbers of distracted Wretches unfit either to live or die, but frightened at the Apprehensions of Death's near Approach, ran up and down confus'd, some cursing, some crying. — No
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Calm appeared but in the Faces of *Abdomar*, and his *Bellraizia*, and they appeared undaunted but for each other's Fate, and seemed to comfort themselves, that since they must die, they should die together. As for *Idalia*, not all the Misfortunes she had endur'd, or the little Probability there was that Life should afford her any great Portion of Felicity, could enable her to support the Terror of this dreadful Hour; for it was not much more from the beginning of the Storm to the Time in which the Ship, bulging against a Rock, was dash'd to Pieces. Most of the Mariners, as expert as they were in swimming, perished in this watry Desolation; but *Idalia*, reserv'd to know more and greater Ills than yet she had endur'd, was miraculously preserv'd: In her Fright she had catch'd fast hold of one of the Beams which ribb'd the Side of the Ship, which being in the dreadful Crack torn off, she clinging round it, was plunged at once among the Waves. Who that had been Witness of this Scene would ever have believed they should have seen her alive on Shore? Yet it so pleas'd Providence, that the Storm, as though it had done the Work it was rais'd for, ceas'd immediately after, and the Piece of Timber lightly floating bore her to the Wreck of another Ship, which, like that she had been in, had suffer'd. — The broken Carcass lay tossing up and down, and stopp'd her further Progress. They were so near the Shore, that some People (as 'tis common for those who live by the Seaside) coming out in Boats either to enrich themselves by the Ruins of those who have perished, or to afford their Help to those who are in a Condition of receiving it, spy'd afar off with Wonder this little Log, which they discern'd bore something living on it, and made up to it with all the Speed their Oars enabled them: They arriv'd just Time enough to prevent *Idalia* and her Supporter from sinking, as else they must inevitably have done, suck'd into the Whirlpool which that unwieldy Wreck had made; and it was with all the
Difficulty.

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Difficulty in the World, and Danger to themselves, that they saved her. She was more dead than alive when they got her into the Boat; but rowing back again as soon as they could, one of the Men, who happened to be of a charitable and compassionate Disposition, carry'd her in his Arms to a little Cottage he had just by the Sea-side. — He had a Wife, whose Humanity and Goodness was much beyond what could be expected from People of their Station: She undress'd her, laid her on a Bed, and us'd the utmost of her Endeavours to bring her to herself, which at length she was successful in; and *Idalia* lifting up her Eyes, began to enquire where she was, and what happen'd; for she was capable of remembering nothing, since that dreadful Burst which tore her from her Company: Which when she had been inform'd of, and that in all Probability there was not a Person sav'd but herself, she was in the greatest Concern imaginable for the unhappy Fate of *Abdorman* and *Bellraizia*.

SHE continued some Days too weak to travel; and after she was in a Condition, could not resolve in what Manner: Her Beauty had led her into so many Dangers, that she resolved for the future to disguise her Sex till she should arrive at a Place of Safety; and persisting in her Design of going to *Naples*, thought her best Way would be through *Rome*, being now not above thirty Miles from thence. She had a String of Diamonds in her Hair the Day she left her Father's House, and on her putting on the Habit of a Country Girl to escape from the House where the unknown Person had plac'd her, she had ty'd it round her Arm under her Sleeve; this she gave to her good old Host to sell, knowing it would be sufficient to pay him for his Trouble, and defray the Expences of her Journey.

THE poor Fellow honestly discharg'd the Trust reposed in him, and brought her seven hundred Crowns; some part of which she dispos'd of in making

king him and his Wife a grateful Retribution for their Kindness; and some of it she laid out in furnishing herself with Men's Clothes; the rest she kept to supply her in her Travels. But what beset her in them, and the Continuance of the Adventures of *Abdomar* and *Bellraizia* (who had not perished as she imagined) must be left for the next Part; which shall be the last, and fully conclude the History of this unhappy Wanderer.

The End of the Second Part.



IDA.



I D A L I A:

O R, T H E

Unfortunate Mistress.

P A R T I I I.

HOW little are those blest with a paternal Protection, able to comprehend the thousand Dangers which attend a wandering and unguarded State of Life ! The unhappy *Idalia*, accompanied by that honest good-natured poor Fellow, who had preserved her from the Sea, had gone above half her Journey to *Rome* without meeting any Opposition ; but happening to overtake three Gentlemen, who falling into Discourse with her on the Road, had told her, they were travelling that Way, she discharged her Guide, as believing she should have no further Need of him. Her Men's Clothes, which she became exceeding well, she thought was Security enough from any of those Insults she had of late been so terrified with, and the Company of these
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Gentlemen from the Danger of losing her Way, or any other Inconvenience. But alas! as much as she imagined she knew of the World, and as great a Variety of Adventures as she had gone through, she was now entering into a Misfortune she had not the least Notion of: She had not parted from her Conductor above a quarter of an Hour, before her new Companions began to ask her, what her Business was at Rome; how far she had travelled; the Names of her Parents; and a thousand other impertinent Questions, which she was not a little puzzled in what Manner to answer: But she thought there was no great Occasion for disguising the Story of her Shipwreck, therefore gave them a brief Account of that; and as to the rest of their Enquiries, only told them, that her Design was for Naples, but having suffered so much by the Uncertainty of the Weather, she chose rather to take so long a Journey by Land, than trust any more to the Mercy of the Sea. They did not seem satisfied with this Reply, but press'd her very much to let them know to what Study she had been bred. *You appear,* said one of them, *to be a very pretty Youth; I cannot think you are of Quality, because you are without an Equipage, therefore must imagine your Education has been either for the Gown, or the Army. Doubtless it is so,* added the other, *and you have no Reason to conceal the Truth of your Affairs from us, who probably may be of Service to you.* Ay, resumed he that spoke first, *that we may, provided he has but Resolution.* *Hark ye* (continued he, looking on Idalia) *can you handle Arms? — Have you ever learn'd to fence? —* Interrogatories like these took from her all Capacity of answering! She grew both terrified and amazed, though she knew not the Cause, till one of them, who seemed to be the fiercest, gave her to understand they were of those who were called the *Banditti*, and that if she would consent to list herself among them, she would never want for any thing. At this Information it was as much as she could do to keep herself from fainting away; but
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summoning all the little Spirit she had left, at last she had Courage to tell them, she had neither Need, nor was fit for any such Employ : But that she thank'd them for their kind Intentions ; and endeavoured to make her Refusal as civil as she could, fearing, and not without Reason, that Men who lived as they did were not of a Humour to endure Plain-dealing. But all she could say, palliated not the Bitterness of her first Words, so much as to engage them to forgive the Contempt with which they found themselves treated ; and one of them looking on his Fellow, presently cry'd, *Damn the little saucy Rascal, let us stick him against a Tree.* — No (replied the other, who seem'd something more pitiful) *let the foolish Boy live to repent his refusing so good an Offer ; 'tis not worth our Trouble to kill him.* Well then, said the first, *we'll see what a Stock of Money he has that makes him so proud ; and since he thinks himself above sociating with us, he shall help to support us without his Company.* Ay, ay, rejoin'd the other, *with all my Heart.*

POOR *Idalia* was too much frightened all this while to be able to utter one Word more, though by it she had been sure to save both her Life, and that which was now almost as precious to her, that little Money which had been raised on the last Thing she had of Value in the World, but suffered herself to be stripp'd of it without either entreating, or complaining. After they had ransacked her Poekets, they contented themselves with what they found there, and killing the Beast she rode on (to prevent her making any Pursuit after them, in case any Persons should chance to come that Way, and join with her in it) left her to get to *Rome* as she could.

It was some Time before the Terror this Accident had put her in, gave her Leave even to reflect on the Misfortune that was befallen her ; but when she did, scarce any thing could seem more dreadful to her : Had they not destroyed her Horse, she might have hoped either to have found her Way to *Rome*, or some other Town, from whence she might have

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writ to *Venice* for a Supply ; but to travel on Foot, was little agreeable to the Weakness and Delicacy of her Sex and Constitution : Besides, to be entirely destitute of Money in a Place so altogether unknown, was what might have shocked a Courage infinitely exceeding her's. She vented some Part of the Anguish of her Soul in Tears, but they unavailing to help her forward in her Journey, and the Necessity there was of prosecuting it, she at length rose from the Ground she had been sitting on, and began her weary Pilgrimage ; the Thoughts of which, and the little Probability there was she should ever be able to go through it, render'd her yet more incapable. She went on a slow Pace, yet too fast for her to continue long, and her Strength and Spirits failing, a thousand tormenting Considerations all at once assaulting her, Despair, which the natural Chearfulness of her Disposition had so often repelled, now seized on her whole Soul ; she yielding to the black *Idea* of her Woe, and thinking it vain to struggle any more against the overpowering Tide of strong Affliction, suffer'd herself to be born away with it, and for some Moments lost the Pain of *Thought*.— She was stretched at her Length in a kind of Slumber, or rather Fit, by the Side of a little Stream which ran through a Meadow in Sight of the great Road : Her Hat, when she lay down, had fallen off her Head, and her delicate Hair was blown by the Wind to and fro, now shading, now disclosing all her lovely Face to the Sun's burning View, who, if capable of those Desires which Poets have described him with, must have forsaken his *Car*, and stooped to be more blest than *Daphne*, had she been kind, could ever have made him.

IT was in this Love and Pity-moving Posture she was discovered by a Lady ; who passing by in her Chariot had seen something lie at that Distance, and had Curiosity enough to alight and walk to the Place where she was.— But when she beheld the Features of the beautiful *Idalia*, which neither the Fatigue, nor Fright, nor Grief she had endured, could render

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render unlovely, she began to feel a Trembling at her Heart, which she was too well acquainted with, not to comprehend: But not being of a Humour to constrain her Inclinations, indulged the growing Flame by gazing on, till the seeming *Chevalier* beginning a little to recover, looking up with Astonishment to see a Lady of a most dazzling Appearance, and attended by a Number of Servants in a Place where but a Moment before (as she imagined) she had been alone, and without Hope of meeting any body, had such an additional Charm to what her sleeping Graces wore, that the already enflamed Lady, taking her for what her Dress bespoke her, was now half mad with wild Desires; but endeavouring to conceal her Sentiments from the Observation of her Servants, she turned to them, and being of a ready Invention, presently told them, that lovely Youth was one of her near Relations, and she supposed by some Villany had been betrayed, and left there in that Manner. *Idalia* was enough come to herself to hear what she said, but had not Presence of Mind at that Juncture to determine how she should behave: At first she thought of discovering her Sex, believing it might be an Inducement to one of the same to afford her some Relief; but her speaking in that Manner to her Attendants, prevented her, and she remained silent, as not being able to guess what 'twas she meant, till the Lady asking her how she came to be alone; and in a Disorder which was visible in her Face, she told her she had been in the Hands of Robbers, who had left her nothing but her Life. *Thank Heaven for that,* said the enamoured Lady, *all other Misfortunes may be redeemed; and since I know you are a great Way from your own Home, be pleased to accept of mine for some time: My House is not above three Miles distant from hence; I have a Chariot waits, and you shall go with me to take that Repose which the Condition I find you in seems to require.* *Idalia* had not the Power of answering her any otherwise than with a low Bow, so much had one Surprize on the Back of another depriv'd

priv'd her of her wonted Readiness of Apprehension; but thinking whatever Design this unknown Lady had, either in the Civilities she shewed her, or the Tale she had invented of her being a Relation, it could not be any thing to her Prejudice, or if it were, it was still shifting the Scene of Vexation, which to the Wretched is some Ease, she gave her Hand, and suffered her to lead her to the Chariot; where as soon as they were seated, *I perceive*, said the Lady, *that you are surpris'd at what I told my Servants; but it was a Stratagem which my Prudence inspired me with: My Pity to see a Person of your Appearance in so dejected a Posture, first led me to a Resolution to remedy your Misfortunes, if it be in my Power; and the Regard every Woman ought to have for her Reputation, join'd to the common Safety of us both, to make you pass as a Relation, lest at the Return of my Husband, who is now absent, and will be for some Days, my Behaviour should be reported to him in a different Manner from what I would have it, — There is,* continued she, *a curs'd Necessity in Wedlock, which obliges one sometimes to disguise the Truth, and for that Reason Fools should never marry.* These Words, and the Air which accompanied them, made the pretended *Chevalier* guess to what Motive she was indebted for this unexpected Relief, and in spite of the various Disquiets which possess'd her, could scarce forbear smiling to herself at the Oddness of such an Adventure; but thinking it could not be to her Detriment to humour the Caprice, and having too well been acquainted with what Men say on those Occasions, answered her in Terms which were infinitely obliging to her. Donna *Antonia* (for that was the Name of this Lady) already began to flatter herself with a Belief she was secure of the Heart of this young Charmer; and free from all those Fears which generally are the Companions of Love, talk'd all the Way with as much Familiarity as tho' their Acquaintance had bore the Date of as many Years as it did of Minutes: But desiring to be informed of the
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Name and Quality of her Lover, our little *Hero* presently told her, that though there were some Reasons which obliged him to conceal himself, yet that he should make no Scruple of letting her know both who he was, and why he left the Place of his Birth : And then related a long Account, which she form'd in the speaking, that she was born at *Verona* of one of the most noble Families in the Place ; but, having the Misfortune to kill in a Duel a Son of one of the Magistrates, was obliged to fly till the Affair could be made up. *This, Madam, said the counterfeit Don, is my History, nor have I any thing farther to inform you of, than that in my Way to Rome, I met some of the Banditti, who have plundered me of all the ready Money, Jewels, and Bills I had about me, leaving me in the Condition in which your Compassion found me, without any thing to recommend me to your Care, but a Heart entirely free from all Engagements except those which the Influence of your Charms has made.* In fine, the little Gallant address'd in a Fashion so agreeable to the Sex she imitated, that it was no Wonder Donna *Antonia* was both deceived and charmed with it. When they came to the End of their Journey, they alighted at the Gate of a magnificent Dwelling, which being opened, our young Adventurer was conducted in with all imaginable Ceremony ; a fine Collation was immediately set forth, where the richest Wines, choicest Fruits, and extravagant Kindness of the fair Inviter, strove which most should please the beloved Guest : But, alas ! whatever Smiles her Face might be constrained to wear, her Heart felt little Satisfaction in all the Splendor she saw about her, and the Welcome she found : She long'd with the utmost Impatience to be alone, and at liberty to indulge a Melancholy she had but too just a Cause for ; and pretending to be still out of Order with the late Fatigue, entreated she might retire. *Antonia* willing to oblige her Favourite in all Things, deny'd herself the Pleasure of his Conversation, to allow him that of his

his Repose, and ordered him to be shewed to a Chamber, one of the noblest in the House.

IDALIA had been so much accustomed to the Vicissitudes of Fortune, that she was less astonished at this, than probably another would have been : But it serv'd very much to encrease the Perplexities she was in. She knew not whether to consider it as a good or ill Chance : To be relieved from the Fear of perishing in so miserable a Manner as that of Want, she could not but acknowledge as a peculiar Mark of the Care of an All-seeing Providence ; but then the Passion, which the Mistake of her Sex had inspir'd in the Person ordain'd to be her Deliverer, she thought an *Omen* of something fatal to her, though she could by no means form any Conjecture by what Means. Full of melancholy Reflections of the Dangers, the Terrors, the Disappointments she had met, and those which in all likelihood she was yet to encounter, she fancied she regreted the unaccountable Obstacles which had hitherto hindred her from a monastick Life, the most of any Misfortunes she had gone through ; but, alas ! how little was she capable of judging of her own Soul ! — The Remembrance of *Myrtano's* Charms, — the swelling Transports whenever Imagination presented him to her, with those tender Wishes in his Eyes, which often she had read there, — the Horror which invaded her, when she reflected on his Infidelity, — would soon have made her sensible in any other's Case, that it was to the Temple of *Love* the chiefest of her Orisons were directed, and *Religion* had but the second Place. But however it were, never Woman endured more through the working of so many different Passions ; and it was the Confusion of her Thoughts alone that render'd her incapable of forming, much less of keeping any Resolution Reason should suggest. It certainly had been the most prudent, as well as most honourable Part, to have confess'd herself a Woman to *Donna Antonia* ; but the Uncertainty what she should do, or where to retreat, if by that Discovery she should forfeit her Protection,

deterr'd

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deter'd her from it. The Perturbations of her Mind, which hinder'd her from closing her Eyes all Night, the vast Fatigue she had endur'd in walking so much beyond her Strength, together with a Cold she had got by lying on the Grass, threw her into a Fever; which as soon as *Antonia* was inform'd of by the Servant whom she sent with a Good-morrow, she order'd a Physician immediately to give his Attendance: All imaginable Care was taken, nor could there have been more, had the Welfare of the whole World depended on this single Life. — What Zeal, what Caution, what Tendernefs, does Love inspire, when alarmed with the least Danger of losing the beloved Object! *Antonia* would needs be present at every Prescription, trusted no Hand but her own to mingle up the Medicines, watch'd herself by the Bedside, and chid the tardy Nurse's Sloth, listen'd to every Groan, and answer'd them with Sighs. Never did the fondest Wife, the tenderest Mother, or most dutiful Child, with such unfeigned Concern, such interested Hopes and Fears, alternate Joy and Terror, every Day, almost every Hour, receive the different Sentiments which the Physicians gave, according as the Distemper abated or encreas'd. For several Days no settled Judgment could be made of Life or Death; but at last, the Strength of Nature in so young a Person, joined to the extraordinary Care and Skill which had been us'd, o'ercame the Malignity of the Disease, and she was transported with the News, that her dear Cousin (for so she call'd the feign'd *Chevalier*) was entirely out of Danger.

BUT this Indisposition had made a very great Alteration in the Sentiments of *Idalia*; for as before she but fancy'd she wish'd for a *recluse* Life, she now in reality began to do so; with her bodily Strength, her Passions were now debilitated, the Noise and Hurry of the World were now in good earnest odious to her, and Love itself, though not wholly extinguished, burn'd with a dim and feeble Fire: The Duties of Religion, and a true Repentance for the

Mismanagement and Follies of her past Life, now took up all her Thoughts; and as she was of a Disposition generous enough, when Vanity, Pride, or Love, did not oversway her, she resolved to undeceive *Antonia*, and use the utmost of her Endeavours to persuade her to turn the Current of her Affections, where both the Laws of God and Man required them, and henceforward banish all Desire but for her Husband. She had just fix'd herself in this pious Resolution, when *Antonia* came into the Chamber; and before she could have an Opportunity of executing it, told her, the Reason she had absented herself so long (for she had not been there in some Hours) was, That her Husband was returned from *Viterbo*, where he had been some Time before her Arrival, and that in Decency she had been obliged to dine with him; but having told him, she had a near Relation in the House, he desired, if it was not inconsistent with his Repose, to be admitted to visit him. What *Idalia* had to say would have taken up more Time than could now be spar'd; besides, she was willing to see what the Person and Behaviour of this Gentleman would allow her to say in his Favour, before she attempted to work any Change in the Sentiments of his Wife: Therefore only telling her she should receive the Favour he intended her with that Pleasure which became one so much oblig'd, *Antonia* took her Leave with a Smile, which testified it was not to him he had been obliged, and immediately returned accompanied by her Husband.

IDALIA, by reason of her Weakness, still kept her Bed, but was supported by Pillows in such a Manner, that she rather *sat* than *lay*: She had compos'd her Mind as much as possible, that she might be the better able to make a Judgment of this Gentleman. But how immediately was it o'erthrown! — how, in an Instant, was all the Sedateness she had assum'd chang'd into Confusion, Shame, Horror, Distraction, when the Moment they enter'd the Room she saw, the Husband of *Antonia* was no other than *Myrtano*!

What

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What Words can represent, what Heart conceive what hers endured at this so unexpected, so shocking a View! A thousand Furies all at once possess'd her, chill Fear and burning Rage, wild Jealousy and mad Despair, and Thought-disjoining Amazement, with all the black *Ideas* they could raise, crowded into her Soul. — Of all the surprising Accidents of her unhappy Life, nothing is more to be wondered at, than that she survived this dreadful Moment, or at least did not by some Extravagance discover both her Sex, and the Cause of her Distraction: But though her Eyes shot perfect Fires, and seem'd to start from forth their glowing Orbs, — her Lips trembled, her Hair stood an end as though some Spectre had met her Sight; and every Limb was shook with inward Agonies; yet she neither spoke, nor acted any thing which could give the Standers-by the Liberty of guessing from what Cause the Alteration they beheld had sprung. *Antonia* appeared infinitely troubled to find so sudden a Change, which she looked on as a Relapse into that Distemper which had given her so many Fears; and *Myrtano's* Good-nature and Complaisance obliged him to join in her Concern. They stay'd not above a Moment or two, *Myrtano* easily perceived the Stranger was not in a Condition to endure Company, and *Antonia* ran instantly away to send for the Physician.

HAD they stay'd longer, 'tis probable indeed she might not have had the Power of preserving herself undiscovered; for it was not to any Presence of Mind that her Reserve was owing, but to the too great Multitude of various Emotions, which, warring with each other in her Bosom, would not suffer her to utter any. — She fell into a Swoon the Moment they left the Room, and by that Means was very near discover'd to the old Nurse that attended her, that her Patient was not of the Sex she pretended to be; for after rubbing her Temples, and applying Things to her Nostrils, she was about to open her Linnen Waistcoat; which she had always

wore close button'd, just as she recovered: But her *ill Genius* had prevailed so far over her *good one*, as not to suffer the Discovery to be made in a Manner so little to her Prejudice, as also to prolong her Life, to experience more Misery: In spite of her Weakness, in spite of the additional Torments the Sight of *Myrtano*, as Husband of *Antonia*, had inflicted on her, she grew better every Day, and in a Week's Time was able to walk about her Chamber: All which Time she was visited several Times in a Day by the fair Wife of Don *Myrtano*, who in spite of the Caution she had of giving him any Suspicion of her Inclinations, could not forbear gratifying them so far as to come as often as she could get an Opportunity, to look upon her Soul's Ador'd. But the Sentiments of *Idalia* were now entirely chang'd again; she no longer thought it proper to make herself be known, nor could find in her Heart to use any Endeavours for the Conversion of *Antonia*; she rather wished her Indifference for him might encrease; for since she knew her to be a Rival, and a Rival possess'd of all those Joys she once had vainly hoped, not all the good Offices she had done her could hinder her from regarding her with a mortal Hatred. — Him too she hated, or she imagin'd at that Time she did so; and if in the wild Tumults of her troubled Thoughts she ever was compos'd enough to pray, it was only to invoke Heaven to revenge her Wrongs, and curse them both with lasting Discord and eternal Strife.

ALL the Time of her keeping her Chamber, *Myrtano* had never offered to visit her since the first Time; at which she was not a little astonish'd, and began to fear that even in that transient View he had seen enough through her Disguise to know her; and conscious of the Injustice he had been guilty of to her, was ashamed to meet the Reproaches of her Eyes. — *Antonia* was also surpriz'd, but would not press it, nor ask the Reason of his Neglect, lest he should imagine her, as she was, too far interested in it; and having by his Absence greater Opportunities of entertaining her Beloved,

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loved, did not much perplex herself about finding out the Meaning of his allowing her to do so. She was infinitely more concern'd, that the Darling of her Wishes had made so small a Return to her Advances: The seeming Youth had behaved himself with so much Gallantry the Day she brought him home, that she expected an immediate Declaration of Affection would have ensued. All the Time of his Sickness she had no other Fear than to be deprived of her Desires by Death; but now, when she perceiv'd him perfectly past Danger, she found herself farther from the Possession of them than ever she had believ'd herself; and one Day being alone in the Chamber with him, could no longer contain the furious Ardour with which she was possess'd; but not only by her Words, but also Actions, endeavour'd to make the dear Ungrateful sensible how much she had suffer'd from his Coldness.

IDALIA, who hated her before for being the Wife of *Myrtano*, now despis'd and scorn'd her; the endearing Expressions with which she was treated by her, made her appear more odious; and wholly unguarded by the Multiplicity of her Reflections, before she was aware, flinging away, and stamping, *Gods! Gods!* cried she, *is this a Woman for Myrtano to love?* She had no sooner spoke these Words, than he rush'd into the Room with his Sword drawn, and had certainly prevented her from ever saying more, if his Wife, as much surpriz'd as she was, had not been quick enough to prevent him, by catching fast hold of his Arm, and continuing to hang upon it, notwithstanding all his Endeavours to throw her off; *Begone, perfidious Woman*, said he furiously, *unless you wish to perish, with your Minion, a Victim to your shameful Passion. Is it not enough that you conspir'd the Death of her who alone was worthy of my Love, but you must add Adultery to your Design of Murder?* — You know I am not ignorant of your monstrous, — your more than brutal Disposition: — How dare you then to tempt me thus, lest I should take a full Revenge for all my Wrongs

at once? I never, never wrong'd you (interrupted she, still clinging fast about him) If I contriv'd my Rival's Death, 'twas Love of you that was the Cause, inhuman Man as you are to upbraid me with it. And was it Love of me (resum'd he, more violently) that induc'd you to court this Stranger, who falsly you would have pass'd on me for a Relation? — But I have been inform'd of all, and will have Reparation. In speaking these Words, he us'd his utmost Force to disengage himself, and having done it, ran fiercely at *Idalia*; which she perceiving, evaded the Blow by falling on her Knees; and imagining something by the Reproaches which in his Indignation he had made his Wife, prevented him from lifting up his Hand against her, by crying out to him, *Hold, hold, Don Myrtano, I conjure you spare my Life till you shall know who 'tis you are about to destroy, and till you satisfy me who that Lady was, your Wife so cruelly design'd to murder. What is that to thee* (resum'd he, vex'd that he had mention'd that before him) *Oh! 'tis of more Moment* (answer'd she) *perhaps, to you and me, than yet you comprehend: — For Heaven's sake then, and for your own, indulge my Curiosity in this Request, and tell me, if the Lady design'd to fall a Sacrifice to you and Love, was not call'd Idalia?* — Both the Husband and the Wife started from their Places they stood in at the Mention of that Name, as tho' a Clap of Thunder had pronounced it; but the former looking earnestly in the Face of the Person that spoke it for the space of two or three Minutes, found something there that dissipated great Part of the Fury that he had been in: The Air, the Features, and the Voice of *Idalia* were too deeply imprinted in his Memory not to be distinguish'd thro' all Disguises. Immediately he knew her, and regardless of his Wife's Presence, flew to her, and caught her in his Arms, and cried in an Extasy which no false Lover could feign, *It is, it is Idalia, my only everlasting Charmer.*

It was impossible for a Woman, who lov'd with that Transcendency of Passion, to be thus clasp'd,
yet

yet feel no Satisfaction in the tender Pressure : Not all the Resentment she had against him for his marrying another, had Power to make her resist his Embraces ; but as soon as he had given them Truce, which he did only to gratify his Sight with another View of her dear well-known Face, as he had done his Touch in holding her to his Bosom, she recollected herself enough to remove some few Steps from him; and looking on him with a Countenance as severe as she had Power to put on, — *I was satisfied you should know who I am* (said she) *because you should be sensible how little your Wife has been capable of wronging you in the Manner your jealous Fury had suggested ; but desire not, as you are now another's, any Testimonies of that former Affection which was between us, which you have forfeited, and I am willing to forget, since the Remembrance would be as great a Crime in me, as that you lately suspected her guilty of.* He was just going to reply, when Donna Antonia, who had all this while been unable, by reason of her Surprise, to discharge any Part of the Rage she was full of, stepping hastily between them, cried, *And are you Idalia ?* Yes (answer'd she, not at all daunted at the Fury she saw in her Countenance) *and I imagine you are the Niece of Count Miramont.* 'Tis probable here might have follow'd a Combat of Words; the War of Women, if Don Myrtano had not put an End to it. *Madam* (said he to his Wife, in a Voice nothing soften'd from that in which he had spoke to her before) *tho' I am assured no Injury could here be done me, yet your Intentions were the same. My own Ears heard you declare a Passion shameful to your Sex and Character ; but it is hereafter that I shall tell you my Sentiments on this Affair. In the mean Time I commanded you, by that Power the Name of Husband gives me (and which your forfeiting all Title either to my Love or Respect, obliges me to make use of) to retire to your own Apartment, and wait my Coming. This* (continued he more sternly, perceiving her not about to go) *if you refuse to obey, I will this Moment*

make Complaints of your Behaviour to the Pope, and lay before him the whole Scene of your Proceedings. Of as haughty and impatient a Disposition as Antonia was, this Menace exacted her Compliance; and she left the Room, only casting a Look back on Idalia, which spoke, more plainly than a thousand Words could do, the Violence of her Rage.

THE Reader will easily imagine, that after she was gone, Don Myrtano address'd his long-lost Charmer with all the soft Endearments suitable to so surprising an Occasion; but she, who was not willing to yield to the Pleasure she took in hearing them, and without desirous to be inform'd by what means Donna Antonia had known her to have been her Rival, it being a Secret she believ'd to all in Venice, and also if it were really she who had brib'd the *unknown Person* to murder her in the Forest, let him know it would be more satisfactory to her to be let into what he knew of these Affairs, than all he could say on any other. He was too glad of an Opportunity, which, while he oblig'd her in the Grant of her Request, would also clear him of his suspected Infidelity, to let it slip; and engaging her to sit down by him, while he fulfill'd her Commands, began to unravel a Mystery, which had appeared so confounding to her Understanding, in these Words:

The History of Don Myrtano, and Don Honorius dell Miramont.

YOU may remember, Madam (*said he, sighing*) doubtless with an Infinity of Indignation remember, that the last Time I ever had the Blessing of seeing you at *Vicenza*, I receiv'd not the Honour you then vouchsafed me, of assuring me you would not refuse to be mine, when ever I should claim you by Ways you should approve, and as became a Man worthy of the adorable *Idalia's* Affection: But, oh! had you been sensible what I endur'd in the severe
Necessity

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Necessity of appearing so ungrateful, so stupid, so blind to the inestimable Happiness that Condescension offer'd me, you would rather pity than condemn me : — I had, when I was very young, been contracted by my Parents to Donna *Antonia dell Miramont*, she who is now my Wife; and who, being bred here at *Rome*, I had never seen : But a former Intimacy between our Families was the Occasion of this, which I must now call unhappy *Union*. For my part, as I had a Heart entirely unprepossessed, I agreed to it without any manner of Reluctance, but had not Complaisance enough to take a Journey to visit her : The Count her Uncle, perhaps, imagining the Sight of her might engage me to hasten the Consummation of the Contract, sent her to *Venice* with an Equipage and Train proportion'd to the Fondness he had for her. At her Arrival I thought her very agreeable to what I then wish'd for in a Wife, and indeed lik'd her better than any Lady I had seen ; nay, I really loved her enough to be impatient for the Celebration of the Nuptials, and accordingly ordered every thing to be prepared for it. The Day was appointed; and it was that in which my unhappy Brother and Don *Ferdinand* fell Rival Victims to Love and your Almighty Charms. Decency forbade the *Hymeneal* Torch should mingle with the *Funeral* Taper, and the Wedding by Consent of both Parties was deferr'd. A fatal Curiosity inclining me to see those Eyes, those lovely Orbs of shining Ruin, I no longer thought *Antonia* worth my Care ; but I need not tell you how much I lov'd, how much I ador'd an Excellence so far beyond all that ever was called Mortal ; a thousand, thousand Times you have read it in my Eyes ! — These glowing burning Balls, which never gaz'd upon you without starting, and almost breaking the Strings which held them with Extasy unspeakable ! — with Pleasure wound up to such a Height of racking Rapture, that it even became a Pain, and stagger'd Sense ! — O what would I not then have given to have had it in

my Power to offer you a Passion worthy of your Acceptance! — How did I curse my Engagement with *Antonia*? — How many Stratagems did I invent to break with her? But she, better acquainted with the Secret of my Soul than at that Time I imagin'd, artfully evaded my Excuses, and circumvented me in all, either because she then had really an Affection for me, or, as 'tis most probable by her Conduct since, thought it would be a Reflection on the Power of her Beauty to have it said, she had come so far to marry a Man who on any Terms could be brought to forsake her. — In fine, let me do what I would, say what I would, she seem'd not to resent it; and render'd it an Impossibility for me to quit her, without making myself appear the most ungrateful and perfidious of Mankind. — I was in this perplexing *Dilemma*, when you made Trial of my Faith, by proposing what I would have given my Soul to have had it in my Power to accept. — I am sure you cannot forget the Confusion which was too visible in my Countenance not to be observed, which perhaps you might impute to another Score, but was really occasioned only by the inward working of my tumultuous Desires, which long'd with an Ardency inexpressible to satisfy you in a Demand which would have been so glorious for me; yet I knew not how I should effect it, though a Multitude of Inventions crowded that Moment at once into my Head, and flatter'd me with some little Hopes. — I went, you know, immediately away; which Haste proceeded from my Impatience to return with Tidings more suitable to my Passion to bring, than any I had yet been able to tell you. — Alas! I little thought 'twould be so long before we met again, nor of the Treachery which was then in Agitation to separate us for ever: — But of that hereafter. —

WHEN I had put in Execution all the Stratagems my Passion for you inspired me with, and found them fruitless to work the Effect I wish'd, — I had no longer Patience, but resolv'd at my next Visit to dis-

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disclose to you the whole History of my Misfortune: On the Road to *Vicenza*, about four Miles distant from my own *Villa*, I saw a Horse standing still; and looking down on a Person who lay on the Ground by him, I presently imagined it was somebody who had either suffer'd by a Fall from that Horse, or the Villany of some Robbers: But drawing nearer to offer what Assistance was in the Power of myself or Servants to afford, I heard him utter most piteous Lamentations, mixed with Groans. — Both Christianity and common Compassion obliges those of the highest Rank of Life to do what good Offices they can, even to the meanest; and though this Man appeared to be one of those, I should have thought it a Pride no way commendable to have trusted the Relief of his Misery to any Care but my own: I immediately alighted, and raising him a little, presently discover'd (to my great Surprise, to find him in such a Posture and Habit) the Face of *Don Honorius dell Miramont*, the Brother of *Antonia*, and without Exception, a Chevalier of the most Perfections I ever found in Man.

IDALIA could not here forbear interrupting him, to let him know he might spare himself the Trouble of giving any Character of that accomplish'd young Nobleman; for she was perfectly acquainted with his Worth, having the Honour of being frequently in his Company at *Venice*.

YES, *Madam* (resumed *Don Myrtano*) I am sensible you have seen him, and that the Consequence of such Interviews have been such as you never fail of causing, — to inspire a Passion too just to be opposed by Reason, and too violent to suffer any Considerations to be of Force to overcome it. But (continued he) to pursue the little History I am about to give you, this unhappy Gentleman, who seem'd in Agonies such as seizes on the Body when the Soul is departing from it, no sooner cast his Eyes upon me, than he cry'd out, O *Don Myrtano*, you come in happy Time to revenge my Death! — I am poisoned! — the fatal Dose was given

me by Ardella.—— A sudden Pang seizing him that Moment, prevented his saying any more for some Time; and I, who perceiv'd his Condition was indeed deplorable, thought it not a Season to talk, but act, if there were any Means which Art or Nature could furnish to repel the Malignity of the Poison; and immediately dispatched one of my Servants to *Villa Rica* for a Litter, and another to *Padua*, to order a Physician, who I knew was a most skilful one, to meet us at *Vicenza* with all possible Expedition; the third, for my good Fortune I had so many with me, took Care of my Horse while I kneel'd down by the agoniz'd *Honorius*, and by holding his Sides, and sometimes his Head, according to the various Shootings of his Pain, afforded him some little Ease. I was impatient to the last Degree, to know what he meant by saying my Servant *Ardella* had given him the Poison, and fancied him to be a little delirious with the excessive Torture he endured, till having a little Respite from it, he again said, That it was she who had administred it to him, but that he very well knew it was to oblige another she had done so. These Words gave me Apprehension that he might imagine it occasioned by my Order, and I was beginning to protest my Innocence; but he perceiving my Intent, cry'd out to me to speak no more, for he was well assured I was both innocent and ignorant of any such thing: *But*, continued he, *I know not if you will afford me any Pity for my Sufferings, when you shall be told the Injury I have done you: But we are neither of us exempt from Faults; and you must pardon me, as you would wish to be forgiven by those to whom you are guilty of Injustice.*—— There was something so mysterious in these last Words, that I could not possibly dive into their Meaning; and the Violence of his Pain returning, prevented me from desiring him to make an Explanation of them, till another small Cessation happening, he did it of his own accord in this Manner:

You

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YOU must know, said he, that in all her Pride of Innocence I happened at a Ball to dance with the admired *Idalia*, and from that Moment was inspir'd with a Passion for her, which not all her late Misfortunes, which have made so great a Noise at *Venice*, could erase. I was just determin'd to urge my Suit to Don *Bernardo's* Ears, when her sudden Absence from his House prevented me; since which, though I have searched for her with a Diligence proportioned to the Love I had for her, I never could hear the least Tittle to what Place, or with what happy Man she was retired, till my Sister's Jealousy of you furnished her with Means to inform me, without knowing, at the same Time, how much she oblig'd me in it: But coming one Day to visit her, I found her drown'd in Tears; which enquiring the Reason of, she told me, You had of late very much degenerated from the Affection you once profess'd, and which the Engagements between you demanded the Continuance of. She presently took it in her Head, that there must be some Rival in the Way; and imagining she was either at *Vicenza*, or near that Place, because she had observed you pass most of your Time there, contrary to your Custom; and resolving to satisfy her jealous Curiosity, found out a Method which nothing but the subtil-working Wit of an impatient disappointed Woman could suggest: She got acquainted with a Sister of *Ardella's* (who, by some Accident she had heard, was a sort of House-keeper to you at *Vicenza*) and by her Means with herself: By Promises and Bribes she engaged that mercenary Wench to her Interest, and won the whole Secret from her of *Idalia's* having been from the Time she left *Venice* a Guest there, first to Don *Henriquez*, and afterwards to you.

SUCH a Discovery was, I confess, sufficient to alarm a Heart much less imperious than *Antonia's*; but having as great a Share of *Cunning* as *Pride*, would take not the least Notice to you that she had any jealous Sentiments, much less that she was apprised

pris'd of any thing which could raise them. When she gave me this Account, she little imagined I had any further Interest in it, than the Part which Nature obliged me to take for a Sister affronted in this Manner; but tho' I was not without that Consideration also, yet the Affection I had for *Idalia*, and the Misfortune I thought it to have her in your Possession, had infinitely the Pre-eminence, and I presently form'd a Contrivance of dressing me in the Fashion you see, and went to *Vicenza*; where lurking about the House, I was in hopes of seeing her, or at least hearing something more than yet I had been informed of. But Fortune favoured me not so far; I had been there several Days before any thing occurred to my Observation: But what added to my Disquiet, the Sight of you twice entring, and the Imagination what a Prodigality of Felicity you were going to enjoy in the Society of *Idalia*, made me almost wild. But at last I found an Opportunity of getting into the Company of *Ardella*, and by the Character my Sister had given of her sordid Disposition, knowing which Way to ingratiate my self, made her Presents of some little Trifles, which I bought of a Fellow who I saw offering them to Sale: They were such as were suitable to the Appearance of the Person who gave them, and tho' of very small Value, were acceptable to this greedy Creature; and I soon become so great with her, that I flattered myself I should in a little Time be Master of the whole Secret of *Idalia*. Complaining that I was in Distress for a Lodging while I stay'd at *Vicenza*, she made me an Invitation of lying in your House, till I had finished the Business which I pretended had brought me to that Part of the Country. You need not doubt but I accepted of an Offer so obliging to my Wishes, assuring myself I should now have an Opportunity of both seeing and speaking to my ador'd *Idalia*, to whom I resolv'd, let the Consequence be what it would, to discover who I was; if she was detained there against her Inclinations, as sometimes the good Opinion I had of her led me to believe, I design'd

design'd to bear her off, tho' with the Hazard of my Life; or if it were thro' Choice she had continu'd with you, to endeavour, by all the Arguments I was Master of, to perswade her to remove.— But, alas! my Expectations in this, as in all other Things, were frustrated; tho' I was in the House several Days, she kept so close to her Appartment, it was impossible for me even to get a Glimpse of her: And I was beginning to despair I ever should be so bless'd, when as I was sitting in the Hall, meditating to what little Purpose was all the Pains I had taken, *Ardella* came to me, and bidding me follow her into the Garden, led me to that Part of it which was most remote from the House, and taking me by the Hand, *Banno* (said she, for that was the Name I went by) *you pretend a great deal of Friendship to me, what would you do to prove the Reality of what you have profess'd?*

You may imagine I was not a little surpriz'd at her speaking in this Manner; but soon recollected myself enough to assure her, I would do any thing in my Power. *What I have to desire of you (resumed she) will not only be an Obligation to me, but also to yourself, if you are but possess'd of two Qualities necessary for the Undertaking; they are Secrecy and Resolution: Therefore, before you promise, examine your own Heart, whether there is any thing in it which would tremble at the Performance of a Deed, perhaps, such as the World calls by the Name of bloody,—cruel,—barbarous, and such like Epithets, invented only to fright the ignorant from accomplishing their Wishes, and cheat us into tame Enduring:—Weigh well, if you can boldly make your Fortune by one brave Blow, without a childish Repentance afterwards, which would undo both yourself, and those by whom you are employ'd. I was too impatient to know what 'twas she meant, to hesitate much what answer to make, but immediately promis'd to stick at nothing, not thinking myself obliged to a Performance, if it were either inconsistent with my Honour, or Interest.—My ready Compliance made her take me for such a one as she*
wanted,

wanted; and shewing me a Purse of Gold, Look here! said she, *all this is yours to encourage you in the Undertaking; but there are three Times as much in store for you when you bring Word 'tis done:—* But let me know it, said I, that I may haste to execute it.— I depend upon you, answered she, and hope you will be so much a Friend to yourself, as not to disappoint the good Opinion I have of you.— You must know there is a Lady of the highest Quality in Venice, who has taken a Disgust to a Woman, and would willingly have her dispatch'd into another World. She is at present in this House; but there are Reasons which make it not proper the Deed should be done here;— but early in the Morning, — I will put you in a Way.—

THE Horror which seiz'd my Soul at this monstrous Injunction, which by all Circumstances I was certain my Sister was the Contriver of, was too great for Description; but the Darknefs (for it was Night) help'd me to conceal it from the Observation of this Wretch; and she bidding me be up by Break of Day, went into the House, leaving me to ruminate on what I had promis'd to perform. In the midst of my Concern for having a Sister oversway'd by her Passions to an Act so detestable, I rejoic'd that I had it in my Power to prevent the Perpetration of so black a Purpose, and spent best Part of the Night in determining how I should contrive to preserve a Life, which I doubted not but her Malice would a second Time attempt, if she shou'd know she had been disappointed in the first. At last I bethought me of a Woman, who had formerly been a Nurse in our Family, and was now removed with her Husband to a little House a great Distance from any Town; there I resolv'd to secure the design'd Victim from any future Violence; and when I reflected on the Blessing this Chance would give me, I could scarce lament I had a Sister of so cruel a Disposition, since to her Barbarity I should be indebted for a Joy, which 'twas probable not all my own Assiduity, and constant Services, would ever have been able to obtain.

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As the unfortunate *Honorius* was in this Part of his Relation, the intermitting Torture which had given him Liberty to utter thus much, return'd with treble Fury: He roar'd with Extremity of Anguish: — Nimble Twitches ran thro' all his Frame, — convulsing every Nerve: — Sure at that Time he must be possess'd with more than mortal Courage to sustain such Racks, else would he by some Act of Desperation have finish'd them at once. —

As *Myrtano* was going on in condoling the Misery this unhappy Gentleman had endur'd, *Idalia*, not a little amaz'd to hear that the unknown Person, to whom she was so much obliged, was *Honorius*, had the greatest Impatience imaginable to know the End of this Adventure; and that he might the sooner come to a Conclusion, desired he would wave all the Particulars in what Manner she had been preserv'd, and come to those of which she yet was ignorant.

MADAM, reply'd *Myrtano*, he was not in a Capacity of relating much more than what I have recounted; there was in this last Fit so little Intermission of his Agonies, that he had only Space between them to run over, in as brief a Manner as he could, his Behaviour to you in the Forest, and his conducting you to the House he had thought of for you; but as he was just going to mention in what Part of the Country it stood, he was seiz'd with another Pain, which was to that Violence, that it entirely deprived him of his Senses, and from that Time all he said was so unconnect and wild, that nothing was to be inferred from it. I was infinitely troubled when I found it was not in his Power to give me any Account how he came, after he had left you, to my House again, to receive that fatal Drug from the Hands of *Ardella*; but resolving at my Return to force the Knowledge from her, I left my Servants, who by this Time were all come back, to attend the *Litter*, while I posted home to secure her. She, who was far from imagining what had reach'd my Ears, came into the Room immediately on my calling for her; and was be-

beginning with a well-acted Disquiet to tell me a long Story of your making your Escape unknown to her; but I was too full of Distraction both for your being gone, and the dreadful Mischief which by her Means had fallen on *Honorius*, to endure to listen to her, and put a Stop to her Discourse by telling her I was made acquainted with her horrid Actions; and accusing her both with the Murder of you, and the very Man whom she had brib'd to that inhuman Deed, gave her so terrible a Fright, that she immediately fell on her Knees, and confess'd herself guilty. After which I oblig'd her to acquaint me with the Particulars of her Crime, and she recounted to me how, by the Instigations of Donna *Antonia*, she had given you a Letter, which was to make me appear guilty of the highest Baseness imaginable, and by the same cruel Woman's Orders had contriv'd your Death, and then that of the Person employ'd in it, fearing he might some time or other betray what he had done: But when I told her, him whom she had poisoned was Don *Honorius*, the Brother of *Antonia*, and she saw him brought in, I thought the Creature would have dy'd with Fear: She again threw herself at my Feet, and trembling, conjur'd me to permit her to make her Escape; but I would not grant her Request, resolving, if *Honorius* dy'd, to give her up to Justice, and in the mean time had her confin'd in a Room on the Top of the House, whence it was impossible for her to get away, without the Knowledge of the Servant whom I order'd to keep the Key: But by what Insinuations I know not, she beguil'd him to betray his Trust, and they both fled together; but where, I never could learn, nor indeed did I give myself much Trouble about it, knowing if the Business should come before a Magistrate, there would appear so much Intricacy in the Affair, especially when *Antonia* interpos'd her Cunning, as the Case for her own sake exceedingly required her to do, he would be extremely puzzled what Sentence to give. But to return to *Honorius*: When the Physician had examined his Pulse, and watch'd some
Hours

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Hours by him, and given proper Medicines to expel the Poison, he seemed to be in great Hope of saving him. *Antonia*, whom I immediately writ to, with an Account of what had happen'd, came to *Vicenza*; almost as much distracted, or feign'd to be so, for the Mischief she had caus'd, as her Brother was. But not to spin out my Narration beyond your Patience, after a prodigious deal of lingring Torment, he at last was out of Danger, the Poison not happening to have been strong enough to seize the Seats of Life; tho' it miserably destroy'd the Outworks. He lost his Hair, Eyebrows, and the finest Set of Teeth that could be: — His Strength was very much decay'd, and all the Vivacity and Gaiety of his Temper gone. Nothing of what he was remain'd, but his unextinguishable Passion for you; and that enabled him to take a Journey to the Place where he had left you, before he could get the Physician's Consent to venture a little Walk in the Garden; but contrary to all our Perswasions he went, tho' till his Return he made no Confident whether he was going, imagining, as he told me afterwards, that had I been appris'd of his Design, my Passion would have carry'd me there before him. And indeed he was not deceiv'd in his Conjecture; no Consideration should have withheld me a Moment, had I known what Place *Idalia's* Presence bless'd, and to that End watched every unguarded Word his Frenzy utter'd, in hope of discovering the dear Secret; but failing of it then, could not expect it at his Return of Reason. Never did I see a Man so oppress'd with Melancholly as he was, when he came back from seeking you: He then related to me where he had left you, and your Removal from thence, none knew to what Place: and lamented with so zealous a Concern the Improbability there was he ever should be so happy to see you more, that I, tho' his Rival, and brought into the same Misfortune by him, could not deny my Compassion to his Grief. — But why should I delay to tell you, that the Loss of you sat so near his Heart, that he grew weary of the World, resolv'd
to

to appear in it no more, and enter'd into the Society of *Gray-Friars*, of which there is a Convent at *Segonadica*. I was pretty near bearing him Company; for *Antonia* finding all the soft *Blanishments* she made use of were ineffectual to work the End she aim'd at, made an Application to the *Doge*: The great Interest her Uncle the *Count* had with him, engaged him to favour her Cause so far, as to leave me no other Choice than the Performance of my Contract with her, or go immediately into a Monastery, and by taking Orders, set her at liberty to marry another. I will not trouble you with the Chagrin I was in at this arbitrary Decree, which yet I had no Appeal from. — You see me now her Husband. — Soon after I became so, Count *Miramont* died, and *Honorius* having forsook the World, the greatest Part of the vast Possessions he was Master of fell to *Antonia*, on which Occasion we came to *Rome*, most of the Estate lying hereabouts: A Blessing (*added he*) little proportionable to that which Heaven has so unexpectedly favour'd me with, the meeting here the dear, the everlasting Mistress of my Soul, my never, never-to-be-forgotten *Idalia*!

HE clos'd this long Discourse with a tender Pressure of her Hand, and such an Infinity of soft Transport in his Eyes, as sufficiently assur'd her Marriage had made no Alteration in his Sentiments. But she, who expected to hear something more of what the Designs of *Honorius* had been, ask'd *Myrtano*, if he had never heard any Mention of a Letter she had entrusted him with to her Father; which, after having begg'd her Pardon for omitting that Part of his Rival's Generosity, he inform'd her, that he had told him the Reason of his desiring her to write to Don *Bernardo*, was, that he might have a Pretence to wait on him, and declaring the Passion he long had for her, ask his Consent to make him happy; which if obtain'd, he would have return'd to her without his Disguise, and brought her back to *Venice* with an Equipage suitable to the Quality of Don *Bernardo's* Daughter and *Honorius's* Wife.

Wife. 'Tis much (said *Idalia*) that if he were possess'd of so sincere an Affection as what you represent, he discover'd not himself before he left me, having done me a Service which he might well believe would entitle him to my Esteem.— The Reason he gave me for it (answer'd *Myrtano* bowing) is such a one as is infinitely glorious to me; but I know not if you will pardon my repeating it.— He said, adorable *Idalia*! that he found you too full of Tendernefs for the happy *Myrtano*, to hope he should be able to find Room in your Heart for any second Impression, till Time and Absence, and your Opinion of my Infidelity, had help'd him to erase the former. *Idalia* could not forbear blushing at these Words, which put her so much in mind of the Extravagancies she had utter'd in the Forest, little suspecting she had such a Witness of them. But she had a Person by her, who would not see her in that soft Confusion without taking his Advantage of it; and making use of all those tender Artifices which Love inspires to charm the list'ning Fair, he at last won her to confess that he was still as dear to her as ever: He would not leave the Chamber till she had promis'd to stay with him for some Time, as at first she had made a Scruple of doing, since she imagin'd (as indeed it was natural enough to believe) *Antonia* would not only be excessively disquieted herself, but also contrive all the Means her Wit and Malice could furnish her with to render her so too. Nor did her Fears deceive her: Never was a Family more distracted than that of *Myrtano's*, the restless and indignant Temper of his Wife being, by his keeping a watchful Eye over all her Actions, prevented from bursting out in publick, shew'd itself in the most trivial Concerns. She seem'd to make it her whole Study to disoblige him; and he on the other Side, heartily hating her, did all he could to break her Heart. The Servants were ever countermanded by the one, if about to do any thing they were order'd by the other; *Myrtano* always exerting his Authority, would be obey'd, and *Antonia* was not of a Humour to endure it.— All their Days were pass'd in Quarrels, and their Nights

Nights in fullen Discontent.— *Idalia* alone was uncontroul'd, and free from those Jars with which the Ears of every Person in the House were grated.— None presum'd to contradict her Will, and she had nothing to disturb her Repose, but what she endur'd from the Reproaches of her own Meditations, for having been the Cause of so much Unhappiness to others. To make her Life more easy, the amorous *Myrtano* had prevail'd on her to throw off her Disguise of Mens Cloaths, and in exchange for them had presented her with various Suits of the richest, and most becoming a young Lady could wear; and to prevent the Servants, or any other Person who had seen her in another Garb, from making any Constructions to her Disadvantage on her Change of Habit, forc'd the haughty Soul of *Antonia* to submit so far to his Humour, as to own her still for a Relation of hers, who for some Reasons had for a Time thought fit to disguise her Sex.— What a Stab this must be to a Wife, let any one judge!— But the Crimes she had been guilty of, in first conspiring against her Life, and afterwards in entertaining a Passion so contrary to her matrimonial Vow, made it but just she should receive such Treatment: But as she was of a Nature too impatient to reflect on what she had done amiss, so she had also too much Pride to endure the Punishment without Agonies, which sometimes brought her into a Condition little differing from Madness.— She complain'd of her ill Fate, but had none to remedy it:— She curs'd, but had none to assist her in her Desire of Vengeance.— Fancy cannot form an *Idea* of more consummate Wretchedness than what this Lady suffer'd, compell'd to obey, yet eager to command,— wild to proclaim her Wrongs, yet oblig'd to call 'em none, lest by publishing her *Husband's* Faults, she should give him a Pretence for exposing hers.

IDALIA all this while pass'd her Hours in those Amusements, in which her Soul most delighted; she list'ning to the incessant Vows of soft Insinuations which daily fell from the enchanting Tongue of her adored

adored *Myrtano*, rejoic'd to find him guilty of no other Infidelity than what his Fate compell'd him to; and transported that his Affections were rather heighten'd than diminish'd, and utterly forgetting the solemn Protestation she had made before she fled from *Vicenza*, never, on any Terms, to yield to see him more, or think of him but with Disdain and Hatred, a *Monastery* was now the least of her Desire; and tho' he had not yet offer'd at any Freedoms more than Innocence would allow, there was a small Probability that he would always continue to put so great a Constraint on his Inclinations;— yet did she either not consider it at all, or in so slight a Manner as gave her no Pain.— Those Apprehensions which had so much alarm'd her, when, to preserve her Honour, she hazarded all the Dangers of the Sea, were now no more:— Lull'd in the pleasing Lethargy of Love, Reflection slept, and all the vigorous Warnings of Virtue, Fame and Reputation, were in the soft Enchantment hush'd to Peace:— She saw nothing but *Myrtano*,— heard nothing but *Myrtano*;— her Soul, all dissolv'd in tender Languishments, had no Leisure for any other Contemplation:— He soon perceiv'd it, and with soothing Art, by unperceiv'd Degrees stole gently from one Liberty to another, till at last, almost unawares even to herself, she yielded to all his burning Passion aim'd at, and thought the guilty Joy sufficient Compensation for the Loss of Honour.

MYRTANO had an unfashionable Constancy in his Nature, which made him not esteem *Idalia* the less for her giving him this last and greatest Proof of the Tenderness she had for him.— Possession was so far from abating, that it rather increas'd the Ardour of his Affections:— He never saw her without new Desires; each Look express'd unsatiated Longings; and every Enjoyment was like the first, or more transporting. Thus for a Time were both as blest'd as the Gratification of their utmost Wishes could make them: But guilty Pleasures are never of any long Continuance; the inconsiderate Heart, which, quitting *Virtue*, places
its

its whole Felicity in *Love*, sooner or *later*, must confess the Error, and curse in unavailing Penitence the luscious Crime which lured them on to Ruin. The Sense-enslaved *Myrtano*, and his unthinking Mistress, were not permitted to riot many Months in their unlicensed Raptures, before as dreadful as unforeseen an Accident happen'd, which was the Occasion of separating them for ever.

THE enrag'd *Antonia* perceiving it an Impossibility ever to regain the Esteem of her Husband by the Measures she took, and disdaining to make use of any softer Means, bent her whole Thoughts on Vengeance:— The Contentment she saw in the Eyes both of him and *Idalia*, put her beyond all Patience; — she could not bear it; — and being, by *Myrtano's* Watchfulness, and Knowledge of her vindictive Nature, prevented from doing any Mischief to either of them, resolv'd to buy Revenge at any rate; she at last form'd a Design which she thought could not fail of answering her End. — What is it that Desperation is not capable of performing? — Those who value not their own Lives, with Ease may reach that of another's, — and *Death* to her was but a trivial Ill, in Comparison with what she endur'd in Life; — she was willing to plunge into Perdition herself, provided she cou'd but drag the Persons she hated along with her. To facilitate her horrid Purpose, she affected to be much more satisfied in her Mind than of late she had been, and with an Air of Humiliation said to *Myrtano*, that being fully convinc'd that the Misfortune of estranging his Affections from her, had been wholly owing to her own ill Management, she was now struck with so sincere a Contrition for what she had done, that cou'd she but obtain a Pardon from him and *Idalia*, she would forsake the World, and retire to a Cloister, and by her future Acts of Piety and Devotion, endeavour to expiate for the Errors of the past. He was too well acquainted with her Art of feigning, to depend much on the Truth of what she said, but wou'd not seem to question it, lest if she had

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had really the Intentions she pretended (as 'twas not impossible but she might) his Suspicion shou'd throw her into her former Violence of Temper, and occasion a Change in her Resolution, than the Execution of which nothing could have given him a greater Satisfaction. He communicated what had been told him, and his Sentiments of it to *Idalia*, who join'd in his Opinion, that there was scarce a Hope she shou'd in good earnest be so alter'd; and also that it was proper for 'em both, however, to counterfeit a Credulity, that, by seeming unguarded, they might the better penetrate into her Designs. But that required more Skill than either of them were possess'd of: The subtil *Antonia* laid her Scheme too deep to be fathom'd by all their Artifices; she behav'd in such a Manner, that it was impossible not to believe her an entire Convert; she pray'd, fasted, wept, nay really sent to the Convent of *Pour Clairs*, entreating they would accept of her; which being granted, and every thing prepar'd for going, she begg'd that her Husband and *Idalia* would pass an Hour or two in her Appartment, and accept of a little Repast with her, before she took her everlasting Leave: She said she could not promise herself an entire Forgiveness of them, without they obliged her in this Request. Neither of them cou'd handsomely refuse her, tho' *Idalia* wou'd have been better pleased to have been excused; but the Consideration that it was the last Time she shou'd ever be shock'd with her Presence, made her the more easily comply.

A very noble Collation was provided; and *Antonia* still continuing to wear her Countenance of Mildness, taking up a large Silver Cup, which she had order'd to be fill'd with Wine.— *Here, Madam,* said she, *may all Offences between us be for ever buried in Oblivion; — and you* (pursued she, turning to *Myrtano*) *my once lov'd Husband, and I hope my everlasting Friend, tho' in this World, Heaven and my own Misfortunes separate me from you, may we in another taste all those Joys which are denied me here; — Pledge*

me, both of you, or I shall think you have but half forgiven those Faults which Passion, Youth, and Inadvertency have made me guilty of. Myrtano could not hear these Words, which were accompanied with a Shower of well-dissembled Tears, without dissolving too; and now fully believing she was in earnest, cou'd not help pitying her Condition. — He took the Cup out of her Hand with a deep Sigh; but being about to drink, a Servant, who stood at the Door, observing all that pass, ran hastily to him, and snatching from his Lips the fatal Draught, cry'd, *What is it you wou'd do, Signior? This Wine is mingled with some pernicious Drug. What means the Fellow!* (interrupted he) *dost not thou see Antonia has drank of it? But do not you* (resumed the other) *I saw her when she believ'd no Eye but Heaven's was Witness of the Deed, take from her Pocket a little Viol full of something, which, I believe, was Poison, and pour it in that Cup, then called for Wine, and mingled them together. 'Tis false* (cry'd Antonia) *'tis false! and thou, Myrtano, hast suborn'd this Villain to accuse me, on purpose to make me hateful to the World, and rob me of that Compassion which my Sufferings merit.* — Hold, Madam (said Myrtano, strangely amaz'd) *moderate your Passion; if wrong'd, you shall have Justice. Tell me* (contin'd he sternly, to the Fellow) *by what Means came you to see this Action of your Lady, which you say she did with so much Privacy? I was coming into the Room* (replied he, with an assur'd Accent) *ignorant that any body was in it, to fetch something I had forgot and left there when I had lighted up Candles: But as I was opening the Door, I saw my Lady, without being seen by her, for her Back was towards me; but standing opposite to a great Glass and Candle by her, I had the Opportunity of discovering what she was about; — I plainly saw her mix the Liquors, which I should not have suspected to be Poison, had I not also heard her speak to herself these Words, — Revenge is more than Life; and presently after, I cannot feel the Pains of Hell, while I see them in 'em* (said she) *Damnation*

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tion will be Pleasure, if they share it with me. *This, Signior (continued he, bowing) was sufficient to make me fear she had something more in Agitation than she pretended, and oblig'd me to watch to whom that Cup was offer'd. Oh! 'tis all a monstrous Lye (interrupted she) you see he contradicts himself: He says 'tis Poison, and that he watch'd to whom I offer'd it — Did I not myself first drink, and would I destroy myself? — I know not (said Myrtano) to what Extremes you may have had Recourse; but if you have here mix'd any Ingredients unfit for me to take, — thus I disappoint your Aim.* With these Words he took the Cup out of the Fellow's Hand, and dash'd all that was in it on the Floor. This Action made *Antonia* throw off the Mask of meek Humility, and appear the Fury: *But I will not be disappointed,* cried she, snatching a Sword which by Accident lay on the Window, and running at *Idalia*; nor Heaven nor Earth shall ward my Vengeance here. But she soon found herself mistaken; *Myrtano* was quick enough to wrest the Weapon from her, with these Words, *Vile Woman,* said he, *now you appear yourself; but as the shameful Passion you had for this Lady, while you believed her in a Capacity of returning it, preserved her once from my mistaken Rage; so shall my Care both now and ever shield her from your Malice. And must I then die alone (cried she in a distracted Tone) must all I have done serve but to leave you free for the Embraces of a Rival? — And must she, that hated Cause of all my Misery, be blest when I am no more? — O Torment, worse than Hell! — Snatch, — snatch me, Fiends, there's not a Spirit damn'd among you feels half my Pains! — Yes, I confess I would have poisoned both; and 'twas the only Joy Thought could allow my lost forlorn Condition, that I should see you, cursing each other in the Pangs of Death for those hot Wishes which brought on your Ruin; — then sink together to the lowest Hell, where I should follow, and be your Tormentor still. — Oh! (continued she, endeavouring to fly at Idalia) that vile Enchantress, whose bewitching Smiles first taught my Soul*

to know an unchaste Desire, had she but perished with me, I would have absolved my Fate of all Injustice.

IN this Manner did she rave, till Don Myrtano, thinking what was most proper to be done, after having took the trembling *Idalia* out of the Room, sent for Physicians to endeavour, if possible, to expel the envenom'd Draught before it had operated too far. But they soon found she had not drank a sufficient Quantity to endanger Life; tho' it happen'd not thro' Care, having no other Design than to die with those her Revenge was so zealous to send out of the World; knowing the very Manner of their Deaths cou'd not be kept a Secret, and that the Law wou'd not suffer such Murders to go unpunish'd. In spite of the Impatience of her Temper, which, longer than else it would have been, protracted her Recovery, she was perfectly well in a few Days. But this Adventure being whisper'd about from one to the other (as in such a Family it could not be otherwise) made so great a Noise in *Rome*, that it came at last to the Ears of his Holiness: He had a particular Regard for *Myrtano*, on the Account of his good Qualities; and for *Antonia*, as she was Niece to Count *Miramont*, for whom he had had a very great Friendship; and being concerned to hear of so unhappy a Disturbance between them, sent for them to know the Truth of the Affair. *Myrtano* wou'd have gloss'd it over in as plausible a Manner as he cou'd; but his enraged Wife, whose Fury was not in the least abated, rejoic'd in this Opportunity of exposing him and *Idalia*; which she did in the most bitter and invective Terms her Malice cou'd invent: And this Proceeding oblig'd him, in return, to lay open all her Actions, her Intention to murder that Lady while at *Vicenza*, the base Contrivance of the Letter which drove her from that Place, the Poison which *Ardella* by her Orders, gave the unknown Person, who proved to be her Brother Don *Honorius dell Miramont*; her Passion for *Idalia* while she believed her to be a Man; and lastly, her Design of poisoning both him and her.

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So monstrous a Catalogue of Vices turn'd the holy Examiner entirely against her; he cou'd no longer endeavour to perswade them to a Reconciliation, and told *Antonia* she was a Woman of too dangerous a Disposition to be left at her own Liberty, and therefore order'd she should be forthwith confin'd for Life in that very Convent of *Pour Clairs*, which she had pretended to go to out of Devotion. As for *Myrtano*, he chid him a little, for giving Cause of Provocation, and told him he must resolve to part with *Idalia*, it being consistent with neither of their Reputations to live together; and that it was not only the Ruin of their own Souls to continue in that Course of Life, but also of *Antonia's*, who would never be a thorough Convert till she was eased of the Torments of Jealousy. He closed the pious Exhortations he had made as *Priest*, with a positive Command as *Pope* and supreme Dictator, that *Idalia* should quit his House immediately, and from that Moment he should refrain her Company. This last Sentence afforded some Contentment to the restless Hate of *Antonia*, and she obey'd her own with less Reluctance, as sensible they wou'd not be less miserable in being separated from each other, than she was in the Disappointment of the Revenge she purpos'd.

BUT what Tongue is able to express the Despair the poor *Idalia* fell into, when *Myrtano* brought her home these doleful Tidings? At first he had Power only to inform her with his Eyes that he had something fatal to unfold; but the dreadful Secret must be told, and bursting Sighs, half Words and broken Sentences, at last made her know the worst:— She wept, swoon'd, almost dy'd away, while he was speaking: Nor were his Agonies inferior to those which she endured. But there was no resisting a Power, such as that which had decreed their Misfortunes, at least while they continued at *Rome*:— All that remained to prop up falling Hope, was a Promise he made her of removing as soon as he could dispose of what Effects he had there, either out of the *Pope's* Dominions, or to some

remote Part of them, whence no Intelligence of their Behaviour might reach his Knowledge. This comforted her a little, and she went to a House where he had provided her a Lodging, and Servants to attend her. It happen'd to be in a very pleasant Part of the City, next Door to a Monastery of *Benedictines*, among whom being a great Number of Ladies of the best Families in *Rome*, he hoped, by being acquainted with them, and visiting there sometimes, she might find some Alleviation to her Sorrows. It was some Time before she could bring herself even to wish to receive any Consolation; but being by his daily Importunities (for he constantly writ to her) prevailed on to divert herself by all the Means that were in her Power, she one Day took a little Walk in the *Cloister-Gardens*: While she was there, the Bell rung, and having a little Curiosity to see the Nuns at Prayers, went into the Chapel, where almost the first she cast her Eyes on was a Face perfectly known to her, tho' she could not presently recollect where she had seen it; but going a little nearer, she soon knew the Lady to be the beautiful *Bellraixia*, who, she thought, had perished in the Storm from which herself had so narrowly escaped. The high Esteem she had conceived for her, made her extremely glad to see her safe, but the finding her in that Society, so contrary to the Religion she had been educated in, and her Engagements with *Abdomar*, gave her an adequate Concern, not doubting but that unhappy Gentleman was lost. She longed impatiently for the End of the Ceremony, that she might be informed what had occasioned so strange an Alteration; and singling herself from the Crowd, and standing in a Corner of the Chapel, as near as she could to that Place where the Nuns go out, she gave her a little pluck by the Sleeve as she passed by; which the fair Nun perceiving, made a Stop, and looking on *Idalia*, immediately knew her. There passed several Congratulations between them for their mutual Deliverance from so imminent a Danger; but the Place they were in not allowing

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allowing any long Conversation, *Idalia* could be made acquainted with no more at that Time than that *Abdomar* had also been preserved; and the being told this, was no small Addition to the Surprise she had been in before; which the beautiful *Convert* easily discerning, told her with a Smile the Wonder should be satisfied, if she would favour her with a Visit the next Day; which *Idalia* assuring that she would, took her Leave.

At the Time appointed she enquired for her at the Grate, where a Couple of young *Devotees* were standing, and was answered by one of them, that as for *Bellraizia*, they knew nothing of her by that Name, but that a Lady of a foreign Nation had lately enter'd herself among them, which 'twas probable was the same she enquired for, for she had been but lately christen'd, and was called *Theresa*. *Idalia* imagining it might be she, desired to see her, and the others very obligingly ran to fetch her, who was indeed the same. After a little Discourse on ordinary Affairs, *Idalia* expressing her Impatience to know what had been the Occasion of this sudden Turn in her Principles, as well as Affairs, entreated she would give a Solution to what at present appear'd so great a Riddle: *I must be more rude and unpolite than the most ignorant of the Country I came from* (answered the lovely Profelyte) *if I should refuse to satisfy a Demand which so obligingly testifies you take some little Interest in my Concerns, and have not forgot the Friendship we promised to each other, at a Time when neither of us expected to meet in any other Place than that which we then were in.* But because to relate only what has befallen me since I had the Happiness of seeing you, would render the History of my Life imperfect, if you please I will run over, with as much Brevity as the several Incidents will permit, the Remainder of those Misfortunes, which the Tempest oblig'd me to break off. *Idalia* thanking her with a low Bow for the Trouble she was about to give herself, sat down to listen to what she said, which was in this Manner:

*The Continuance of the History of Abdomar
and Bellraizia.*

I Was confined (*said she*) in the Manner I told you for several Days before I saw any Person from whom I could learn any News how *Abdomar* had been disposed of; which gave me a Rack of Thought infinitely superior to what I felt on my own Account. The first that visited me was *Zatilda*, enjoined by her Father and mine, and *Mulyzeden* (as she did not fail of letting me know) to dive into my Sentiments, and find out if possible the Truth of the whole Affair between me and *Abdomar*: Because the Posture he had been found in by the *Prince*, made them all positive that I had been made acquainted with his Passion. And nothing, she told me, could convince them that I had not only listen'd to, but also allow'd of his Courtship, if I did not instantly consent to ratify the Contract with *Mulyzeden*. You may believe 'twas with an inexpressible Trouble she brought me these Tidings, not doubting but that I should be obliged to comply, to the eternal Ruin of her Hopes: But I assured her to the contrary by all the Affeuerations I could make, protesting I would rather die than make her so unhappy, if no other Obstacle but by Friendship to her had interpos'd; but as I loved the charming *Abdomar*, and was beloved by him with an equal Height of Passion, though his Generosity obliged him to conceal it from me, no Threats, no Tortures, should force me to act so contrary both to my own Wishes and theirs, who of all the World were dearest to me. My renewing the Vows I had before made her on this Score, dissipated great Part of the Chagrin she brought with her; but, alas! she had it not in her Power to give any Relief to mine, having been able to learn nothing concerning *Abdomar*, but that he was in close Prison, and that *Mulyzeden* was yet irresolute what Sentence to pass on him. All the dreadful

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ful Examples of which I had heard or read of jealous Love, came into my Head the Moment she told me this: I fancied I saw him bleeding, dying, for my sake, and begged *Zatilda* for her own sake (since nothing else could give her the Happiness she wished) and for the sake of us all to permit me to reveal the Secret of her Passion for *Mulyzeden*: That (said I) once known, will oblige the King not to take it ill that I refused to do, what done, would make his Daughter wretched.— My Father will not dare to force my Inclinations against the Interest of his Princess, and *Mulyzeden* cannot but glory in the Exchange.— All of us may be happy in our several Wishes, would you consent.— But all I could urge was in vain to win this modest Princess to give me the Liberty I ask'd; she swore rather to die than proffer Love; and we parted without being able to resolve on any thing for our common Satisfaction.

It must be only the Imagination of a Person involved in the same Perplexities I was, can figure an Idea of what I endured in the Reflection of my unhappy State; but as I was sitting alone, after *Zatilda* had left me, the Windows being open for Coolness, I saw something fly in at one of them, and fall at my Feet: Stooping to take it up, I perceived it was a Paper: which hastily opening, I found it contain'd these Lines, which I too often repeated to forget, and were in this Manner:

To the Divine BELLRAIZIA.

I Believe it needless to inform you, that the Posture I was found in by my Prince, has occasion'd a Jealousy of me: But I confess I have not Generosity enough to suffer so great a Misfortune as the Loss of his Friendship without wishing to be pity'd by her, for whom I am content to endure greater Ills. *Mulyzeden* accuses me, most excellent Princess, of adoring you; and, oh! I acknowledge the involuntary Crime! But as my Lips have

ne'er offended by any presumptuous Declarations, I hope, though he cannot, Goodness like yours will pardon a Transgression, which I doubt not but I have as many Sharers in, as there are Souls to be sensible of your Perfections. I am but this Moment released from my Confinement, and in a few Hours must leave Barbary for ever. All I intreat for myself, is your Forgiveness, and that you will believe the Crime for which I am banished: I never should have had the Boldness to reveal, had I not been assured you would have known it without me.

MY next Request is, that you will do that Justice to my Prince, which his unbounded Passion, and a Million of excellent Qualifications, make him merit: And my last to the Gods, that the choicest Blessings in their Power to give, may ever be the Portion of you both, whatever is decreed for

The Unhappy ABDOMAR.

IN what Manner shall I make you sensible of the tender Languishments which at the reading this took up my Soul?— But 'twas not long that soft Confusion lasted; the Reflection that he was going, that I should never see him more, embittered all the Sweets which the Contemplation of so generous a Passion had afforded.— But why should I detain you with the particular Emotions which agitated me according as the different Thoughts rose in me:— In fine, I lov'd, and could not bear to lose him.— All the Remonstrances of Honour, Grandeur, Reputation, were silenced by the more powerful Calls of Love: Since he was banished, I resolved to be the Partner of his Exile, whatever should ensue.— You'll say, considering the Circumstance I then was in, this was a Resolution which promis'd little Facility in the Execution; yet difficult as it was, the Passion which prompted it, inspired me also with a Contrivance to perform it: I bribed one of my Women to procure me a Suit of Clothes, such as our Negro Slaves are wont to wear; and oiling my Face, and afterwards rubbing it over with some Powder, made of the Shells of Chestnuts,

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Chesnuds, and tying up my Hair close to my Head, and covering it with a little Taffety Cap, made myself appear so like one of those I designed to pass for, that I had not the least Fear of being suspected. I also prevailed on the same Woman, whom I had made my Confident, to put on my Clothes; and if any Person from the King, Prince *Mulyzedem*, or my Father, should happen to be sent soon after I was gone to lie down on the Bed, feigning an Indisposition, that they might not discover it was any other than myself that spoke; and exacted a solemn Vow from her, that whatever happened, she should not confess she knew any thing of my escape to any other Person but *Zatilda*. Every thing answered my Wish; *Abdomar* having Leave till the next Morning to prepare for his Journey, I mingled with his Train, and found Means to be entertained among them. I now thought myself most happy, so easily can Love answer for the want of all Things else; nor that I was so abandoned to Modesty as to discover my self to him I had run such Risques to follow; no, I proposed no other Satisfaction in this Flight than to avoid *Mulyzedem*, and enjoy the Presence of the Man I loved; and, indeed, it was a Felicity unconceivable that I took in thus, unknown by him, observing all his Motions, in which I found nothing but what served more to encrease my Admiration and Esteem.

BUT, alas! this Scene of innocent Delight met with a sudden Interruption: We had not travelled above fifty Miles from the Court of *Barbary*, before we were overtaken, and seized by a Party of the King's Horse sent after in pursuit of us. *Abdomar* demanding the Reason, was answered by the Captain, that he must bring back the Princess *Bellraizja*, or discover where she was, since she had made her Escape, and 'twas believed by his Instigations.—*Abdomar* express'd the highest Concern, as well as Astonishment, at hearing this; but protested, as very well he might, that he was entirely innocent of it. But this could not serve his Turn; the Captain was

obliged to obey Orders, and we were all brought back; and *Abdomar* was immediately conducted into the Council-Chamber, where all that had Interest in it were assembled to examine him concerning me.—The Horrors I endured while this lasted, were such as it would be impossible to describe: I imagined that his Innocence would stand him in but little stead to defend him against a Party, who were resolved to think him guilty; nor was I mistaken, they disbelieving all he said, and imagining that if I were not really in his Company, it was on his Account I had left *Barbary*, and that there was some Place agreed on for our Meeting, ordered he should be rack'd to make him confess. This Doom being pass'd, he was brought out; and the Sight of those Men by him, whom I knew to be the common Executioners of those kind of Torments, made me know to what he was decreed; and wild with the Horror of his suffering them on any Account, much more on mine, I lost all Sense either of Shame or Danger to myself, and running in amongst the Guards, cried out to them, *And is it for the Princess Bellraizia that the noble Abdomar must endure the Rack?—If so, let him be remanded back; I can produce the Princess, and clear his Innocence.* Every body that stood near enough to hear me, were strangely alarm'd at what I said; and some of them, running to the Council-Chamber, inform'd the *King* of what I said; on which the Torments decreed for *Abdomar* were suspended, and myself and he introduced.

You may believe how great a Damp 'twas to me, when I saw the *King*, my Father, *Mulyzedan*, and all the Prime of the Nobility, before whom I must either discover what I had done, and the Reasons which occasioned it, or suffer the whole Weight of their Indignation to fall on him who was infinitely dearer to me than either Life or Honour. Therefore being demanded what I had to offer in the Defence of *Abdomar*, and what I knew of *Bellraizia*, I boldly answered what they asked with
another

another Question, which was, That if I proved the Princess's Flight unknown to *Abdomar*, whether they had any other Crimes to accuse him of? And all of them assuring me, that if I did so he was entirely at his Liberty, nothing farther having been alledged against him, I pull'd off my Cap, and letting my Hair fall about my Shoulders, *See here then* (said I, with a Courage which I have been since surpris'd at my self) *see here that Bellraizia whom you seek, and whom nothing but the Guilt of permitting an innocent Person to suffer for a Crime she alone is guilty of, should have obliged to have discovered herself either to you, or any other.* The Amazement the whole Assembly was in, gave me leave to make a farther Explanation of my Meaning, and I recounted to them the Aversion I had for *Mulyzedon*, my Passion for *Abdomar* even before I had the least Hope he would return it, and, in fine, the whole Truth of my Proceedings, bating what concern'd *Zatilda*: And indeed it had happened much better, if I had also discovered that; but she had bound me in so strict a Promise, that I durst not break through it without her Consent. To give you a Description of the different Agitations which I saw in the Countenances of the three I had most Reason to observe, the King, my Father, and the Prince, would be too tedious, so I shall only say, the Fury which I saw in one, could be equall'd only by the others: All were alike incens'd, tho' for contrary Reasons.

I COULD not be a Judge in what Manner *Abdomar* heard so unexpected a Discovery, both because he stood a little behind me, and also that Shame would have prevented me from looking on him with that Earnestness which I did on the others: But if one may form a Judgment by the Passion he has since proved he was inspired with, his Emotions must at that Time be more than ordinary. But to return to my Relation; My Father was the first that broke Silence, and looking on me with an Eye that sparkled with Indignation, *It is not* (said he) *this shameful accusing of your-*
self,

self, that ought to skreen that Traitor from the Hands of Justice. — Yes (interrupted Mulyzeden, no less fiercely) 'tis plain he is guilty; for tho' the Princess has so ingloriously condescended to yield to his Desires, I never can believe she would be brought to it without Professions, such as she thought merited her Compassion. 'Tis false (resum'd I, enraged that all I could do was like to be ineffectual) and thou, unbelieving Prince, deservest not to be bless'd with such a Friend as Abdomar. Then I pluck'd out of my Pocket a Letter he had thrown in at my Window, which was a sufficient Testimony that he never had so much as declared his Passion for me, much less had importuned me to go with him, to back what I said. The Princess Zatilda, who hearing what had pass'd the first Time that *Abdomar* had been examin'd in the Council, and well knowing he had no Share in my Flight, stepp'd into the Room to clear him of this Charge, and immediately knowing me, vouch'd the Truth of what I had alledged. All these Witnesses inclin'd the King, who was a perfect Lover of Justice, however prejudicial it might be to his Interest, to recall the Sentence he had pass'd on *Abdomar*; at which *Mulyzeden*, whose Rage was nothing abated by the Knowledge that what I had done, had proceeded only from my own inconsiderate Passion, and thinking himself affronted on all Sides, turning to the King, Your Majesty, said he, may, whenever you please, revoke your own Decrees, but neither Heaven nor Earth shall debar me from the Prosecution of mine: — I have vow'd the Traitor's Death, and thus I make it good. In speaking these Words, he ran at *Abdomar* with all the Fierceness of an inveterate Malice; but that injur'd Gentleman did not now, as he had done before, bow to receive the Wound he offer'd, but snatching a Sword from a Lord that stood near him, put himself in a Posture of Defence as soon as he perceived the Prince's Design: Time was (said he) I wou'd have welcom'd Death, but now have Cause to value Life, and must, and will defend it for the divine Bellraizia, tho' against you,

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you, next to her, dearest to my Soul. — Villain, thou liest (refum'd the Prince) nor shall thy Flattery move me to Forgiveness. The Guards, which waited at the Door, were call'd in immediately, and having parted them, by the King's Command, bore *Abdomar* to the same Prison he had been in before; not that he was to be treated any longer as a Criminal, but his Majesty thought it most convenient for his Safety, to secure him there from the Fury of *Mulyzeden*. He made me a low Reverence, with such an inexpressible Tendernefs in his Eyes, so soft an Extasy for what I had declared, as was beyond what any Words could have acknowledg'd; but I, tho' I observ'd it with as much Rapture as my Circumstances would allow, was in too much Confusion to make any Return to the endearing Charm: But when he was gone, and I was left alone to the Upbraidings of the whole Assembly (for there was not one there who did not blame my Conduct) what did I not endure! None but *Zatilda* took my Part, and endeavoured to excuse my Proceedings, by pleading the Force of that unconquerable Passion which had been the Cause of them; but she was immediately silenced by her Father, asking her how she came to be so well acquainted with Emotions so contrary to Reason, and to Honour: But Prince *Mulyzeden*, who still loved me, entreated them to cease any further Reproaches, and told me, That if I would permit him to espouse my Cause, by giving him that Happiness my Vows had long since made his Due, all I had done for *Abdomar* should be forgot. No, Sir (said I) I have not gone so far in the Race of Passion to go back: — I own your Generosity, but 'tis *Abdomar* alone I can love: — As I was proceeding, my Father interrupted me, crying out, Degenerate Girl! unworthy the Regard of this noble Prince! — But in the Punishment I will inflict on thee, he shall perceive how I resent the Indignity thou hast offer'd him. — Here (continu'd he, to some of the Guards) bear her to her Appartment, and let her be shifted of these dishonourable Rags; — these shameful Witnesses of her Folly.

The

The Princess *Zatilda* had leave to accompany me, but had it not in her Power to give me much Consolation, or to receive it herself; and I believe never two had more Distraction in their Thoughts than we. — I again endeavour'd, by all the Arguments I was Mistress of, to persuade her to permit me to reveal the kind Thoughts she had of *Mulyzedon*; but she was still obstinate, and would listen to nothing I could say on that Score, and conjured me afresh never to let the Secret slip. But Providence brought it to light without my Breach of Promise; and we might all have been happy, if Modesty, which in others is the greatest Virtue, had not, by its Excess, been her Enemy, and disappointed the Aim of Heaven. One of my Women, who, it seems, had been appointed to attend me only as a Spy, listen'd to the Conversation we had together, and related it to both our Fathers; which you may guess was no small Surprise to them: But mine was so much vex'd at it, as believing this would certainly take away all Hope of my ever being Princess of *Fez*, that crossing his Ambition, he fell into a Fever, of which he dy'd. The King set me at liberty immediately after his Death, but would not disoblige the Prince so much as to give me leave to marry *Abdomar*, who was still in Confinement. — *Zatilda* was yet ignorant that her Secret had been discover'd; and the King perceiving that *Mulyzedon* still had the same Passion for me as ever, knew not which way to bring it about; but at last, finding his Daughter grow extremely ill (as that poor Princess had ever since been consuming with inward Agonies) he propos'd the Matter to him. Never Man had a greater Share of Generosity than that unhappy Prince; and he could not hear he was beloved by a Princess, whom it was not his Destiny to love, without an Infinity of Concern, but had nothing of those Sentiments, which were requisite to make her happy. However, the tender Concern which fill'd his Soul, might possibly have ripen'd into something more to her Advantage, had she not put herself past the Power of receiving it: The Dis-

course

course the King had with him on this Score, was in the Palace-Garden, in that very *Grotto* where I had made the Discovery of the Passion which *Abdomar* had for me : The ill-fated *Zatilda* happen'd to be in one Part of it, while they were in the other, and overheard all that pass'd ; and overcome with Shame that the Secret was discover'd, and guessing by the Answers which *Mulyzedon* made, that she was like to receive no other Benefit by it than the Compassion of the Man she loved, resolved to put an End to the Miseries she had endured, and full of Desperation, plung'd that Moment a Dagger into her Breast. The Noise which her Fall made among the Trees and twisted Branches, of which the *Grotto* was compos'd, obliged her Father, and the Person for whose sake she had done this, to rise from their Seats, and look what 'twas occasion'd it. — It would be needless to repeat the Lamentations of a most tenderly loving Father, to find his only Child welt'ring in her Blood, and breathing her last ; or those which *Mulyzedon* made, when he reflected he had been the Cause, tho' an innocent one. You may easily imagine they were suitable to the Occasion, and to the Characters of the Persons concern'd in it. The most eminent Surgeons were sent for ; but the fatal Weapon had reach'd too far ; and she lived no longer than to receive some Words of Compassion from him, who tho' he could not love, protested after he would gladly have exchanged Conditions, and bought the Preservation of her Life at the Expence of his own.

WHEN she was gone, there was nothing in the Coast of *Barbary* which could induce me to stay in it : And having obtain'd Leave, I retired into the Country, to a Castle which had been my Father's. *Mulyzedon* would not offer to oppose it, nor had made any Visits to me since the Death of *Zatilda*, because he would give no Umbrage to the King ; and I hop'd my absenting myself, fully convincing him that I never would be his, would oblige him to return to *Fez*, or at least to set *Abdomar* at Liberty, who, I was confident,

fident, as soon as he was so, would find some Means
 to let me know it. But, alas! that too constant Prince
 could not forget his Passion! all my Unkindness had
 not the Power of effacing my Idea in his Soul! he
 continu'd to love me with an Ardency which was un-
 vanquishable but by Death, which at last he yielded
 to! and sure if any one ever had a broken Heart, he
 had, for he died of no other Disease but Grief. I
 had often wonder'd, that, considering the Sweetness
 of his Disposition, he had all this while kept *Abdomar*
 in Custody; but Jealousy and disappointed Love can
 know no Medium in their Rage. The Moment he
 was dead, the King gave Orders that he should be dis-
 charg'd, but desired he never would be seen in *Barba-*
ry. I had an immediate Account of all Things, and
 met him in the Way. After a thousand mutual De-
 monstrations of the tenderest Affection, we exchange'd
 Vows never to be parted more; and neither *Barbary*
 nor *Fez* promising much Security, he bethought him
 of buying a Ship, and living a Rover on the Sea, that
 being a Province where no mortal Prince had Power
 to drive us from. We had been eight Months without
 ever setting our Feet on Land, when that dreadful
 Storm, in which we thought you lost, shewing us
 that Heaven deny'd its Approbation of our Love.
 However, it prevailed not to separate us. Clasp'd in
 each other's Arms, we resolv'd, since there was no
 Hope of living, to die together. But when we thought
 our selves most in Danger, we were most secure; that
 Part of the Ship in which we were, was that which
 was dash'd against the Rock, and the other being rent
 forcibly away, this seem'd fasten'd to it, and the Storm
 immediately ceasing, we remain'd in our tatter'd
 Castle, till some Boats coming to our Relief, carry'd
 us safe on Shore.

In the House we were directed to, there was a
 Friar, certainly the most holy of his Order: Being in-
 form'd of Part of our Story by *Abdomar* and myself,
 he told me very freely, that the Breach of my Vows to
Molyzedon had drawn the Vengeance of Heaven on
 me;

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me; and then began to argue with so divine a Zeal on the mistaken Precepts of our Religion, that in a few Days he won us both to embrace the Christian Faith, which my Ancestors had so shamefully abjur'd. To expiate the Sin of living so long in a State of Infidelity, he told us it was necessary to do something more than a bare Acknowledgment we had been in an Error; and in fine, in spite of the unabated Passion we still had for each other, he wrought on us both so far as to prevail on us to take Orders: And by mortifying our Desires in the tenderest Part, endeavour to appease the Offences we had been guilty of. *Abdomar*, as well as myself, submitted to it, and he is now with this good Friar among the *Capuchins*, and I am settled here, where so unexpectedly I have had the good Fortune to meet a Person in whose Conversation I promise myself much Comfort.

THE charming *Convert* here finish'd her Narration; and *Idalia* reflecting on the Instability of that Felicity which only Love bestows, began to grow exceeding melancholy; which the other observing, entreated to know the Cause, and also what had befallen her since their Separation; which she complying with, let the new-made Christian know, that there were both Misfortunes and Inadvertencies occasion'd by Passion as great as what she had experienc'd.

THE visiting this Lady was all the Consolation *Idalia* had in her Separation from *Myrtano*; but she being soon after taken ill of so malignant a Fever, that it was thought dangerous to approach her, she not only lost the Company of one whose Wit and good Humour often diverted her from any despairing Thoughts, to which of late she was too liable, but also of one whose Strictness to the Principles she had embrac'd, might in Time have won her to a Belief, that true Happiness was only to be found in Virtue. And indeed in the Circumstance she then was, never Woman stood more in need of an Adviser: The living in the Manner she had done with *Myrtano*, his Wife's Desperation, and the *Pope's* Decree, had made

too great a Noise in *Rome* not to make her be publickly remark'd; and embolden'd by the Knowledge that she had been a *Mistress*, brought all the young and gay Part of the Town to sollicite for the same Favour; nay, some of them used so little Ceremony as to make her acquainted with their Designs on the first Visit, and others, treating her as a *Courtezan*, demanded to know her Price. Some would agree with her for a Month, others for a Week: All the Insults that Women of that Profession are liable to, she met with; which, considering the Haughtiness of her Disposition, could not be expected but to drive her to Extremes. She writ daily to *Myrtano*, conjuring him to make what Expedition he could to leave *Rome*; and he continu'd to assure her, he was as impatient as herself. But Things not being ready so soon as she expected, she grew transported and wild with the daily Affronts she receiv'd, and was ready to lay violent Hands on her own Life, rather than endure them longer: She began to curse the Cause which had reduc'd her to a Condition, such as could give Room for Liberties so contrary to what she had been us'd to receive, and could so ill bear:—She wanted Revenge on all who durst to use her in this Manner;—and not having it in her Power, was ready to burst with inward Spleen, and stifled Indignation. In this enrag'd Temper, happening to look out of her Window, she saw a young *Chevalier* pass by, whom imagining she had seen before, she look'd more earnestly at, and soon discover'd it to be *Florez*, the Villain who had first betray'd her from her Father's House, and been the Cause of all her Woe. A sudden Thought came into her Head at Sight of him: To be reveng'd on him for all, she sent a Servant after immediately, to watch where he went; which being informed of, she sat down, and disguising her Hand as much as possible, writ to him in this Manner:

TO DON FLOREZ.

A Chevalier, so accomplish'd as you, cannot be surpris'd to be told the Impression you have made on a Heart who pretends to a Capacity of distinguishing.— But I will not go about to tell you how much I am influenc'd by your Perfections, till I see how you approve the Conquest you have made over me: If you have an Hour to spare, bestow it this Evening in the long Walk behind the Benedictine Nunnery, and just about the Close of Day you shall meet

Your enamour'd

INCOGNITA.

SHE did not doubt but the Vanity of his Disposition would make him swallow the Bait she had prepar'd for him, and sent it by a Servant, charging him not to discover either her Name, or where she lived, if Florez should enquire, as 'twas probable he would. But the Fellow, who was hired by Myrtano to attend her, and knew very well it was to him she was indebted for a Support, thought it a monstrous Infidelity to his Lord; and instead of delivering it to Florez, carry'd it directly to him. The Astonishment with which he read it, is not to be express'd; but resolving to inform himself to what Lengths the Perfidy he imagined her guilty of would carry her, he muffled himself up in his Cloak, and went himself at the appointed Time to the Place of Assignment, where he had not waited long before he perceived her coming. There was so little Difference in their Stature, that she might be easily deceived; and coming near him, *I believe, Signior (said she) you are the Person I would speak with: Are you not call'd Don Florez? I am (reply'd Myrtano, in a low and feign'd Voice) You had a Letter (resumed she, drawing a Dagger, and striking it*

it with all her Force into his Breast, before he had Opportunity to discover who he was) *and now I give a Present such as your Villany deserves.* She had Opportunity to say no more, he falling, immediately cry'd out, O Idalia! *what have you done!*—These Words, the Voice, and a closer Observation, made her know to whom she had given the Blow; but all that can be conceiv'd of distracting Grief, of Horror without a Name, was short of what she felt at this amazing Sight: She tore her Hair and Face, rav'd, stamp'd, curs'd Fate, and scarce spar'd Heaven in the Extremity of her Anguish: She threw herself upon his bleeding Body, and kiss'd a thousand Times the Wound she had made.—But this affording but little Satisfaction to the Racks of Thought, which at this shocking Moment hurry'd her wild Brain, she started up, and snatching the Dagger, plung'd it thro' her Heart. He had just Power to open his Eyes, and see the dreadful Reparation she had made him, and then clos'd them for ever. She lived some Hours to relate what she had done, and the Cause that moved her to it, to some Persons whom the Exclamations she made drew thither; but not long enough to see the Justice of Heaven executed on Florez, who being fled from Venice for a Murder he had been guilty of, was discover'd at Rome, and there apprehended, and on the Account of many other base Actions, wholly friendless, he suffered the Law, and dy'd as much unpity'd, as Myrtano and his unfortunate Mistress were the contrary.

F I N I S.

THE
SURPRISE:
OR,
CONSTANCY rewarded.

By Mrs. ELIZA HAYWOOD.

*Love's an heroick Passion, which can find
No room in any base degen'rate Mind:
It kindles all the Soul with Honour's Fire,
To make the Lover worthy his Desire.*

DRYDEN.

THE THIRD EDITION.

THE
SURPRISE:
OF

Constancy rewarded.

By Miss ELIZA HAYWOOD.

THE THIRD EDITION.



THE SURPRISE:

O R,
CONSTANCY rewarded.

ALINDA had Beauty, Wit, good Humour, and by the Death of her Parents, was left Mistress of a considerable Fortune in her own Disposal; which last Article attracted a great Number of Adorers. Among those who solicited her Favour, there were two so equal in her Esteem, that the Regard she had for both, render'd it impossible for her to make Choice of either: The Name of the one was *Ellmour*, and the other *Bellamant*. Each had Perfections rarely to be found in an Age so degenerate as this, and if the former of these Gentlemen had the Advantage of a much longer Courtship, and better Estate than the other, the charming *Bellamant* had Graces which well made up for those Deficiencies.— There was something so prodigiously enchanting in his Countenance and Manner of Behaviour, that it was scarce possible to know him, without loving him. *Alinda*, whether it were that her Hour was not yet come, or that she had not a Soul susceptible

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tible of the tender Passion, felt not any of those violent Emotions which are the Characteristicks of Desire. 'Tis probable, had either of them singly made his Addresses to her, she might have been perswaded to have thought herself happy in consenting; but, all things weigh'd between them, their Merits seem'd so equal, that the Scale would turn on neither Side.

WHILE she was in this Dilemma, a young Lady, a near Relation, whom she had not seen for some Years, came to Town; and the Pleasure she expected to find in her Conversation, for a while gave Truce to all other Thoughts. But, alas! she found not those Charms in her Society which it was wont to afford:— Her once sprightly Wit, and Gaiety of Disposition, was now chang'd to a heavy Languor.— She spoke but seldom; and when she did, it was in such a Manner, that the Standers-by might easily perceive she forc'd herself to a Complaisance, which could not but be painful to her.— *Alinda*, who tenderly lov'd her, was extremely troubled to observe this Alteration; but tho' she press'd her to it by all the Adjurations imaginable, she could draw nothing from her that could enable her to form any Conjecture of the Cause:— Till one Day, as they were sitting together, word being brought to *Alinda* that *Bellamant* was come to visit her, *Euphemia* (for that was the Name of this fair Disconsolate) starting from her Chair and running to the Window, as tho' to look who it was, fell down in a Swoon on the Floor.— 'Tis hard to say, whether the Concern *Alinda* was in to see her thus, or Amazement at what had occasion'd it, was most predominant in her Soul; but performing all the tender Offices of Friendship, in using Means for her Recovery, she at length lifted up her Eyes, but with such a Torrent of Tears, as tho' it was to them she was indebted for forcibly opening those Lids, which but a Moment before seem'd sealed with Death.— As soon as she had the Power of Utterance, preventing any Interrogatories *Alinda* might probably have made, How long, said she, have you been of

Bellamant's

Bellamant's Acquaintance : which the other having answer'd, But a short Time : I beg, *resum'd she*, you will, on no account, mention to him the Name of your unhappy Cousin. — I entreat this Favour of you, by the near Affinity which is between us, by that Friendship you have flatter'd me with, and by that which I have in reality for you : — And in return, I will relate to you the Circumstances of a History you have seem'd desirous to be inform'd of, and which Shame only has kept me from revealing.

ALINDA, though more astonish'd than before, assur'd her, she would most faithfully obey the Injunction she laid on her : And, *said she*, wholly to remove your Doubts, I will not see him till your discovering to me the Reasons you have for an Order, which at present appears so much a Riddle, shall instruct me in what manner I shall proceed. — She had no sooner said this, than she called a Servant, commanding him to tell *Bellamant*, that being engaged on Business, she could not receive the Favour he intended her that Day. You see, *resum'd she*, my dear *Euphemia*, I have, for this Time, put it out of my Power to gratify that Inclination too many of our Sex have for blabbing every thing that has the Appearance of a Secret : And if it will be any Mitigation of the Sorrows wherewith you seem so much oppress'd, will continue still to do so, by never seeing *Bellamant* more. Take heed, kind *Alinda*, *answered the other*, take heed, lest you promise more than you should be able to perform : — Consult your Heart, and then resolve me, if I indeed should exact that Proof of Friendship from you, would it be in your Power to banish *Bellamant* ? I never yet could perceive (*said Alinda, blushing*) that I had any Sentiments for that Gentleman, which should render the parting with him a Difficulty : — But if I were in reality guilty of that Weakness your Words seem to intimate, it must be doing a Violence to myself greater than yet I have any Notion of, that I would not willingly risque, to make you easy. There pass'd between them many

other such Expressions of mutual Friendship and Regard for the Happiness of each other : But the one being impatient for the unravelling an Affair which she could not yet comprehend, and the other as desirous of revealing it, they shut themselves into *Alinda's* Closet, and having given strict Orders to the Servants, not to disturb them on any Account whatever, *Euphemia* began to satisfy her Curiosity in these Words :

The History of EUPHEMIA.

I Need not tell you (*said she*) that my Parents, by their late Misfortunes, were reduced to an Ebb too low, to be able to leave me a Fortune answerable to the Hopes with which I had been educated: You know all those Affairs perfectly well ; as also that my Aunt in *Wiltshire*, pitying the Disappointment which at so early an Age fell on me, took me under her Protection : But you are yet to be inform'd with how extreme a Tenderness she treated me : All the Love which I could have expected from the fondest Mother, joined to the Freedom of a Sister, and the Complaisance of the most distant Acquaintance, I found from her. The Belief that her Affection would considerably add to my little Fortune, with the Advantages of Youth, good Clothes, and a tolerable Face and Humour, gain'd me, in a little Time after I had been in her House, several who called themselves my Lovers :—But I was possess'd with I know not what kind of an Aversion to any Talk of that Nature :—I was not only unsusceptible of Love, but also regardless of Interest, for some of the Offers made would have been highly for my Advantage to have accepted. —Had my Aunt, indeed, been more pressing for me to have made my Choice among them, 'tis probable I should not have run the Hazard of disobliging her ; but as her Goodness to me was in every thing more than common, so it was also in this ; and perceiving no Inclination to change the State I was in, forbore

forbore to urge me beyond my own Desires.—O the Tranquillity I then enjoy'd! —How calm, how undisturb'd were then my Thoughts! —No busy Cares waited on my waking Hours! —No racking Anguish haunted my Nights, and broke my peaceful Slumbers! —Life, like an unruffled Stream, slid on serenely gay! —I was so ignorant of Woe, that I believ'd there could not be a greater than the Head-ach! As for the Disorders of the Mind, I looked on them as chimerical, unless occasioned by some horrid Crime, and therefore unworthy Commiseration.—O that I still had been that happy Ideot! —Dear-bought Experience, how hast thou undone me!

A STORM of Sighs here intercepted the Passage of her Words; and she was obliged to pause, to give the struggling Anguish Vent, which else might have thrown her again into the same Condition from which she had so lately been recovered: —But overcoming, as well as she was able, the secret Load which pressed her Spirits down, she at length resumed Strength enough to prosecute her Relation, in this Manner:

My Aunt (*pursued she*) who, as I have already told you, took Delight in affording me all the innocent Recreations which were becoming me to take, wou'd needs have me accompany some young Ladies in our Neighbourhood, who were going to the Bath, it being then the Season of the Year when all the gay Part of the World resort thither, with as great an Impatience to partake the Diversions of the Place, as the Old and Infirm do in the Hope of being restored to new Life and Health, by the help of those excellent Waters.—You may be sure, I was not backward in complying with a Command so perfectly kind and obliging to me; and, to leave nothing undone, which could make me see she study'd my Credit, as well as Pleasure, she ordered several very rich Suits of Clothes to be made for me, and presented me with Jewels of hers to the Value of some thousand Pounds, and gave two of her Footmen Commission

to wait on me there, as their sole Mistress. It was thought by those who knew she was preparing to set me out in this splendid Manner, that it was done with a Design, that thus adorned, thus attended, I might get a Husband among that numerous Assembly, more to my Advantage than I could in our retir'd Part of the World. If it were so, which I was far from thinking, her kind Intentions found a cruel Disappointment; all those Expectations with my Peace of Mind were sunk, to rise no more! — But I will not anticipate what the Discovery is I have to make, by giving you any Hints which may make light Conjecture to the Sequel. — In fine, I went; made as good an Appearance as any Lady on the Walks; and had my Vanity not a little gratify'd, to find myself more address'd to than some who had been celebrated Toasts, and whose Birth and Fortune were infinitely superior to mine. — I doubt not, indeed, but great part of the Respects paid to me, was owing to my Dress and Equipage; for being utterly unknown there, I was taken for a much greater Fortune than I was in reality.

THE Variety of Humours and Amusements one finds in such Places, is agreeable enough to a Mind entirely at Ease, as mine was, and unprepossessed with any other Ideas; and as I was naturally of a Disposition rather too gay and spirituous than the contrary, I never refused the coming into any Measures which had a Prospect of Diversion in them; — whether the Company was for Riding, Walking, Dancing, Playing, I readily made one, and had the Reputation of being not the least entertaining among them. — But soon these empty Pleasures ceased; one fatal Moment robbed them of their Joys, and taught me to despise the gaudy, noisy Nothings, and send my Soul in search of Happiness more elevated.

HAPPENING to go with one of the Ladies whom I had accompanied from Home, one Morning, with a Design to bath, we perceiv'd a Gentleman just coming out of it. The peculiar Richness and fine
Fancy

Fancy of his Night-Gown and Cap immediately attracted our Eyes; but we could not long be taken up with an Admiration so trifling as his Dress, which serv'd only to make his lovely Form more conspicuous: The Nobleness of his Air, the Exactness of his Shape, the manly Majesty which sparkled in his Eyes, the thousand, thousand unutterable Graces which play'd about his fine proportioned Mouth, too much engross'd our Sight, to leave a Glance for any other View. — Mine it did, at least; and I could have wish'd to have been all Eye, so greedy, so eager was I to gaze upon his Charms. — The God of Love now rush'd at once with his whole Force into my Soul, and in an Instant, every throbbing Vein swell'd with the new, the soft Desire! — The astonishing Delight of looking on him, took from me the Power of Thought; I seem'd as though riveted to the Place I stood in; nor, till he was gone past my straining Sight to reach him, had Speech or Motion, though the Lady who was with me, as she afterwards told me, had several Times spoke to me, and pulled me by the Sleeve to come forward. Ignorant of what I ailed, yet conscious of a wondrous Change within, I long'd to be alone; and, under the pretence of being suddenly a little indispos'd, refused to bath that Day, and retired as fast as I could to my Apartment.

As little an Opinion as I had of Love, I had read a great deal of its Influence; and when I examined the Symptoms in myself, found they were so near the Description of that Passion, that I no sooner began to compare them, than I ceased to doubt if they were the same. — Yes, I felt too strongly the Power I had so long contemned, not to repent of my former Unbelief. — And from the Moment I perceiv'd myself in Love, perceiv'd also I was unhappy; not all the Flatteries I had been accustomed to hear, could make me hope there was any thing in me worthy of being taken notice of by a Man, so far above the common Rank of Men, as to his bodily Perfections,

and who, I knew not, but might be of a Quality which might render all Hope of a Return of Passion from him as insolent, as vain! — Resolving, however, to be ascertained who he was, and, if it was possible, have one more Sight of him, I dressed myself in the most becoming Manner I cou'd, believing that in all Probability he would be on the Walks in the Evening; or if he were not, I should easily find some one or other, who, by my Description of him, might know him enough, to be able to inform me of his Name and Quality. — Between the Time of my seeing him and that to walk in, I had various Conjectures what the Reason should be which had obliged him to remain retir'd in a Place so publick; for I was certain he had very little appear'd abroad, because there was no Assembly in which I had not a Part; and could not think he was lately come, the Season being far spent, and the Company were beginning to think of a Return. — However, in spite of Improbability, this last happened to be the Truth; for I had no sooner entered the Walks, than I saw him there, with an Air and Mien which methought gave a new Lustre to the Place.

THE Freedom used there, gave him an Opportunity of accosting me, and the Ladies with me; which he did in a Manner far above my Hopes; and, in the way of Conversation, let us know how unhappy he thought himself to lose so much of the Season, which had been occasion'd by a Fall from his Horse in coming there, being obliged to lie a considerable Time on the Road to recover some Hurts that Accident had given him. — Just as he was speaking this, some Company joined us on the other side, with whom my two Companions were talking. To be confin'd so long, Madam (*said he to me*) in an odious Inn, was to a Man naturally fond of Delicacy an unspeakable Mortification; but my Misfortune had been by infinite Degrees more terrible to be born, had I known it had detain'd me from the Presence of a Charmer such as you. I will not go about, my dear *Alinda*, to represent with how much Transport I received
this

this little Compliment, nor the Manner in which I answer'd it; you will hereafter have sufficient Proofs of my Weakness, without spinning out my Narration to a tedious Length by the Repetition of Trifles: So I shall only say, this was but the Introduction to a thousand more passionate and tender Declarations.— In fine, he behav'd himself in such a Manner, in spite of the Disadvantages of being in a Place so publick, and unfit for Discourses of that Nature, that I half flattered myself I had been capable of creating the same Emotions in his Soul, which I felt so powerful in my own on his Account. —

I WENT to Bed that Night, with Reflections far different from those which had used to accompany me.— I now knew what it was to hope and fear; — to raise my tow'ring Expectations to the Skies, then sink them with as little Shew of Reason down to Hell, just as wild Fancy and unguided Thought presented an Idea of Events, or to be wished or dreaded: — Confounding Probabilities with their Contraries; — forming a thousand incoherent Resolutions, yet unable to determine any thing. — In all the sweet Perplexities, the pleasing Restlessness that attends new-born Desire, did I pass the Hours till the Dawn arriv'd; at which Time I rose to dress, being to meet him by Appointment, to share the Pleasures of a Morning Walk, which he said was infinitely more agreeable than the Times generally made choice of for that Purpose. — Judge not too severely of my Weakness, dear *Alinda*, that I so imprudently consented to meet a Man alone, a Man whom I had never seen but that Day, and whose very Name I was yet a Stranger to: If ever you have experienced the Force of raging burning Love, you will forgive and pity my Proceedings, not only what I have already related, but that which I have yet to speak. —

SHE blush'd, and paus'd at these Words, perhaps, expecting *Alinda* would make some Answer to them; but perceiving she was silent, and took no other Notice of the Apology she made, than by tenderly look-

ing on her, and gently bowing her Head in Approbation of it, she continued to go on in the Recital she had begun.

To repeat (*said she*) the obliging Expressions he made use of to thank the Condescension I had favour'd him with, would be an Injury to them, since the Energy with which they were deliver'd, and the Looks which accompanied them, added a Charm to them, which all the Words in the World, if spoke by any other Person, could not boast. — I would have you therefore imagine, that all that can be conceiv'd of tender, of passionate, all that the most eager Love and refin'd Wit have the Power to inspire, filled his Professions, and adorned his Vows. —

THE Conversation lasted for some Hours, and ended in my permitting him to prosecute an honourable Pretension: After he had assur'd me he intended no other, and had acquainted me with his Name and Family, That is an Article (*pursued she, blushing more than before*) which I believe I may spare myself the Trouble of relating, since I doubt not but both by my Description of his unequall'd Charms and the Confusion with which I just now saw him at your Gate, you are already sufficiently convinc'd it was no less a Prodigy of Perfection than *Bellamant*, who had the Power to influence me to a Weakness, which, to have been guilty of for any other Man, would not have been pardonable.

IT was with all the Earnestness in the World she fixed her Eyes on the Face of *Alinda*, as though she would dive into her Soul, and read the Effect these Words made on her; but perceiving no visible Alteration, proceeded in her Discourse without any Interruption.

THE Joy I had (*said she, with a Voice more assur'd than before*) to find that *Bellamant* was not of a Rank superior to my own, nor had an Estate which could entitle him to the Hope of marrying a Woman with a better Fortune than what I had in Possession, and was in Expectation of from the Indulgence of my Aunt,

Aunt, is not to be expressed. — I now began to taste the Sweets of Love: I had every Day some new Proof of his Increase of Passion; and sure never Man made so good Use of his Time as he did; for from his coming to the *Bath*, and that in which we were oblig'd to leave it, was not exceeding ten Days; and were I to repeat the thousand, thousand soft Protestations he made me in that Time, you would scarce believe as many Weeks would give them Utterance. We were, indeed, from the Moment in which I permitted his Addressies scarce an Hour asunder, but in the Hours allowed for Repose; and even those, the seeming Impatience of his Passion would infringe, and it was commonly Four or Five in the Morning, before he could prevail on himself to leave me. —

THE Time of our Departure being come, he accompanied us on Horseback to *Wiltshire*; and after having obtained my Aunt's Leave, visited me at Home with the same Assiduity he had done at the *Bath*. — For the space of a Month, I would not have changed my Condition with the first Princess of the Royal Blood: — I thought myself secure of the Affections of the only Man in the World I looked on as worthy of a Passion so sincere and violent as mine, and one who, though I could not live in Grandeur with, I believed had a Competency to maintain us in a handsome Manner. — My Aunt, having had several Conferences with him concerning Settlements and Jointure, approved of all he said, and countenanced our Affections, which seemed to wait a Consummation only for a Gentleman, a distant Relation of hers, who was a Lawyer, and was every Day expected to come down and draw the Writings. At length he came; *Bellamant* had some Talk with him on the Affair, and the next Evening was appointed for signing the Deeds.

HITHERTO the Weakness of my inconsiderate Passion for a Man I had so little Knowledge of, was excus'd by the Appearance of the greatest Honour and Sincerity on his Side; but now comes the black

Part of his Character!—Now, now the Disguise of an Angel is thrown off for ever, and all the Friend in naked Vileness is expos'd to View!—The Morning of that Day, which I expected was to have made him; in every thing but the Ceremony of the Church, for ever mine, instead of coming, as was his Custom every Morning, to give me the *Bonjour*, by the Hands of a Country Fellow; who lived in a Cottage hard by, I receiv'd a Letter from him.——

THE first Sight of the Superscription, for I was perfectly acquainted with the Character, immediately told me who it came from.——The sending a Letter, when I expected himself, and the odd Manner in which it was brought (having a Servant of his own, who, if any Accident had occasioned his Writing, one would think, should have been the most proper Messenger) alarm'd my trembling Heart with Apprehensions which till that Moment I was a Stranger to:—A thousand various Conjectures, all shocking, all confounding, ran in a Moment through my giddy Brain, and so disabled all my Faculties, that I had scarce Strength or Resolution to open it. But when I did, I found the cruel Certainty of my unexampled Shame, and his cold Perfidiousness, in these Words:

To the most Excellent of her Sex, the never-too-much Ador'd EUPHEMIA.

I HAVE for some Days past, my for-ever-lov'd, for ever-ador'd Euphemia! been endeavouring to reveal a cruel Secret, which to have hid from you, would have render'd me more guilty in reality, than I shall appear in the disclosing it; but it was not in my Power, while looking on you, to tell you I must not look on you no more:—Yet such is the sad Necessity of Fate!—I must tear myself for ever from you, must resolve to gaze no more on your enchanting Eyes!—no more must listen to your heavenly Accents!—no
more

more must be bless'd with the transporting Proofs of Love, confess'd for a Wretch, who has it not in his Power to deserve the thousand, thousand Part of that Profusion of o'erpowering Joy your Goodness has so lavishly shower'd on me! — Yes, Divine Creature! I must be curs'd in an eternal Absence; or by staying, and putting myself in possession of that Bliss your Extravagancy of Mercy has made me hope, make you a Sharer in Misfortunes which I tremble but to think on. — Rather let me die in the severest Torments, or suffer the worst Misery of Life, prolong'd in tedious Woe, and everlasting Despair, than be guilty of a Crime to her whom more than my Soul I love, and next to Heaven adore! — Oh! I'm on the Rack while writing this! — How was it possible I should speak it then? — Pardon me! pity me! 'tis all I ask for the extremest Proof of Love a breaking, bleeding Heart e'er gave! — Farewell! — The Tempest in my Mind rages with a Violence too fierce to permit me to add more! — I will not even wish you should remember me, lest it might prevent your giving yourself to some happier Man, though none can ever love you with greater Purity, and zealous Passion, than him who would have hazarded every thing but your Peace of Mind and Felicity, to have been

Eternally Yours,

BELLAMANT.

WHAT became of me at reading this astonishing Epistle, you may judge, by what I have told you of the Violence of my Passion for this perfidious Ingrate. The Grief, the Shame, the Indignation, at being used in such a Manner, were of themselves sufficient to have broke the Strings of a Heart more inur'd to Misfortunes, and better fortify'd with Presence of Mind, than mine: But to those other Passions I had Despair, and an unvanquishable Tendernefs to struggle with: — I knew not whether I was come to the Conclusion, before I fell down in a Swoon, in which I remain'd till my

my Aunt, being told a Letter had been brought me, came to my Chamber to learn the Contents, and found me on the Floor with the fatal Paper open in my Hand. — She called her Women immediately to raise me, while she went aside to examine what had occasioned the Condition she saw me in. —

BEING with much-ado brought to myself, she used all imaginable Means for my Consolation; but my distracted Brain still running on *Bellamant*, — I rav'd incessantly on his Name, entreating he might be sent for, that I might, at least, have the Satisfaction of upbraiding him. — That is what I would have done for you (*said my Aunt*) but, alas! he is gone too far from any thing to overtake, unless it be the Curses his Ingratitude to you has drawn upon him. — How! (*interrupted I, wildly*) is then the Traitor gone? — He is (*resumed she*) On the first Discovery of what had thrown you in these Agonies, I sent to the House he lodg'd in, and by the People of it was inform'd, that he took Horse last Night, after having left that Letter, with a strict Charge, that they should send it by somebody they could trust, to deliver it into your own Hand this Morning. —

THIS Aggravation of my Sorrows, threw me again into the Condition from which I had so hardly been recover'd, that my Aunt for some Time had imagined my Soul had entirely taken leave of my Body. — I continued in these Swoonings the whole Day, and in the close of it fell into so violent a Fever, that in less than a Week my Life was despair'd of by the Physicians, whom my Aunt, in the beginning of my Illness, had sent Post-Horses to fetch, scrupling no Expence nor Care for my Recovery. But it pleased Heaven, contrary to all their Hopes, when my Distemper was at the worst, to give a sudden Check to it. — I fell into a Sleep, which by the Standers-by was believ'd to be my last, and waked considerably amended. By degrees the Violence of the Fever abated, and I was soon restor'd to that *boldly* Health I enjoyed before; but never, never must
hope

hope to recover the Disorders of my *Mind*:— They, like a Vulture, prey upon me still, and will do so while Life shall last. —

A CONSIDERABLE Augmentation of them I receiv'd, when, being no sooner able to walk about my Chamber, than my dear Aunt fell ill. Whether it were that the Disease I had labour'd under had any thing of Malignity in it, or that it was owing to her great Concern for me, I know not; but she was seized with the very same Symptoms I had complained of: And being of too great an Age to struggle with this powerful Enemy of Nature, yielded to its Force, and expired in a few Days. — In the very Pangs of her Death, her Tenderness for me continued; she made her Will, and to compensate as much as possible for the Severity of Fortune in my ill-requited Love, bequeathed me her whole Estate, having, as you know, no Children of her own.

I AM now Mistress of two thousand Pounds a Year, besides a considerable Sum of ready Money; but how little is it in the Power of Riches to buy Content? — All her Goodness has done for me, serves only to make me a more glorious Wretch. — My Grief for the Loss of so dear a Relation, and one who, but for the Contagion of my ill Fate, might probably have lived some Years, was for a Time suitable to the Cause: But that fatal Passion which, from the first Sight of the ungrateful *Bellamant*, had taken Possession of my Soul, would suffer no other to be of any long Continuance. —

AGAIN, the *Idea* of his Charms returned with its full Force, and melted me to Wishes too shamefully tender for me to think on without Blushes: — Again, the Remembrance of his Falshood, and amazing Baseness, worked my aching Brain almost to Madness: — I hated, and yet loved; my divided Soul was torn with Anguish inexpressible! insupportable! till unable to endure the cruel Conflict of such different Passions, I resolved never to rest till I had found him, and, if possible, oblige him to an Explanation of his

his Behaviour, and by the Prevalence of what secret Motive he could be induced so barbarously to quit a Woman he had sworn to love, and who, before this late, unhop'd Addition of Fortune, was every way his equal.— The first Part of my Wish I have already succeeded in, and hope also to accomplish the rest, if *Alinda* is pleas'd to grant me the Continuance of that Friendship she so generously has professed.

HERE the sorrowful *Euphemia* finished her little History; and *Alinda*, after having consoled her Misfortune of losing the Man she was so passionately enamour'd of, entreated her to acquaint her by what Means she could be capable of serving her; assuring her, with a great many obliging Expressions, that there was nothing in her Power, which she would not, with the utmost Readiness, comply with, either for her Satisfaction or Revenge. The first Thing (*answer'd the other*) and perhaps, the hardest I shall ask, is what you have already promis'd, To banish the faithless *Bellamant* from your Presence. That you may depend (*resum'd Alinda*) I would do for my own sake; nor can my Cousin, I hope, harbour so mean an Opinion of me, as to imagine I would continue to entertain him, after knowing he has been false to a Woman, who has a thousand times my Merit.— You may be assured, that were *Euphemia* not my Friend, Self-preservation would be sufficient to prevent me from being her Rival: Therefore insist no more on that Point, but if you would oblige me; command something which may give me an Opportunity of testifying how dear your Interest is to me. There remains no more (*answered Euphemia*) than that you will, by the Means of some Person who may not be suspected, make an Enquiry into his Affairs; I would be acquainted, if possible, with the very Depth of his Circumstances; for you must know, that since I heard he made Pretensions to you, I have hope to find him less a Villain than I believ'd. —How is that likely (*interrupted Alinda, a little surprised*)

prised at these Words) In my Opinion, to address another Woman, after having so solemnly and so publickly avow'd himself your Lover, is the very last Degree of Infidelity and Baseness. — It is, indeed (*resumed the other, with a deep Sigh*) far different from that open Sincerity and Honour he used to say was his greatest Plea for Favour : But when we have Cause to think a Person guilty of the most abhorr'd Crime in Nature, to find it less than we at first believ'd, makes it appear less than in reality it is.

I COULD think of nothing which could occasion his quitting me just at that Juncture, when I was to have been made his for ever, but that he was already married ; and finding I had Friends of more Interest, than perhaps at first Acquaintance with him he had imagined, durst neither proceed further, nor confess the Truth ; and therefore by that *Ænigmatical* Way of Writing, left me at liberty to form what uncertain Conjectures I pleas'd : — But to hear that here in Town, a Place where doubtless he is known, he has endeavour'd to obtain you in Marriage, convinces me, it was not a Pre-engagement which depriv'd me of him. Would it then (*cried Alinda*) be any Mitigation to your Grievs, to be assured, it was from no other Motive than Disgust, he left you ?

EUPHEMIA, though very far from that Vanity by which too many of her Sex are sway'd, could not help red'ning extremely at this Expression : To become an Object of *Dislike* to the Man, whose *Adoration* once we were, is what no Woman can support with Patience, and being of a Temper the most open and sincere that could be, I know not (*said she*) if it would lessen my Grief, but am certain, when I consult my Heart, it would very much add to my *Indignation*, which in Time, perhaps, would enable me to overcome the other less excusable Passion. I cannot acquiesce with you in this (*resum'd Alinda*) I think that though either Way you have sufficient Cause for Indignation, the first Opinion you had of him after the Letter, gave you the most justifiable Title

ble to it;—because, had that Conjecture been true, he had been guilty of a Sin, for which our Laws have decreed a Punishment as severe as for Murder, whereas the other proceeds only from the Fault of Nature, an inborn Inconstancy and Ingratitude, which all Men, more or less, have some Share of.— I am not arguing (*answer'd the other, somewhat peevishly*) which of these two would be the greater Sin against Heaven, or our *Laws*, but that which is so against *myself*.

THE Dispute between these Ladies lasted a pretty while; but *Alinda's* better Reasons in the End prevail'd; and they broke off the Conversation, that she might retire to her Closet to prepare a Letter, which was to discard *Bellamant* for ever.— As soon as she had finished it, she return'd to *Euphemia*, to have her Approbation of what she had written, before she sent it.— She us'd but little Formality in her Denial, taking more Care that it should appear *absolute*, than *complaisant*. The Words were as follows:

TO BELLAMANT.

S I R,

I AM sorry I did not, before now, put an End to the Trouble you have given yourself in your fruitless Addresses to me, but send this, to intreat you will desist visiting me; for, having resolved to give myself to another, it may create an Uneasiness in him, whom I would wish only to be made happy.— I own your Merits, but you know there is no Account to be given for Inclination; which not being in your Favour, I hope you will take this as a final Answer from

ALINDA.

NEVER Woman gave a greater Proof of her Friendship to another, than she did in discarding *Bellamant*; for though her Mind has been very much divided between two, as she thought, of equal Merit, yet she found

found a Charm in *Bellamant's* Conversation, which made it not altogether so easy, as she pretended, to part with him: However, it was not to her Disadvantage; for perhaps it never would have been in her Power to have made her Choice, if this Discovery of his Engagement with *Euphemia* had not happen'd to turn the Balance wholly on the Side of *Ellmour*.

BUT to return, *Euphemia* was extremely satisfy'd with what her obliging Cousin had writ, and it was sent away immediately; but very much fail'd of the Effects they imagin'd it would have on the Heart of him who receiv'd it; for tho' he was, for some Reasons, which shall hereafter be related, a little vex'd at the Disappointment, he had others which prevented him from repining much at her Want of that Affection he had flatter'd himself with the Belief that Lady had for him.

ALINDA was no less diligent in the Performance of her other Promise, than she had been in this: She engag'd a Person, very well qualified for such an Undertaking, to make a diligent Enquiry into the Circumstances of *Bellamant*; and in a few Days he brought them Intelligence, that Gentleman was far from being what he was generally believ'd; that his Estate was too deeply mortgag'd for him ever to redeem it; and that he was also involv'd in other Debts; which put together, would amount to a very large Sum.

THESE Tidings abated great Part of the Indignation *Euphemia* had conceiv'd against him: She now began to imagine, that it was indeed the Fear of making her unhappy, which had made him break off the Match with her; and tho' her Womanish Pride would not suffer her to forgive his carrying his Addresses elsewhere, yet she thought of him with a Compassion which wanted not much of that Tenderness with which she had formerly regarded him. These favourable Sentiments were very much heighten'd in her, when the same Person who had brought the former Account, came with a second, more melancholy than

than the other; it was, that the Creditors of *Bellamant*, who, it seems, had delay'd giving him Trouble, only on being told he was to be marry'd to a great Fortune, hearing the Affair was at an End, had thrown him into Prison, whence, it was believ'd, he never would return.

Now was *Euphemia* convinc'd, it was not through Dislike he quitted her; and the extreme Passion she ever had for him, having Pity added to it, o'erflow'd her whole Soul with such a Tendernefs, that 'tis to be doubted if ever she lov'd him so well as in this Ebb of Fortune, rejoicing it was in her Power to redeem him from the Calamities he labour'd under. She sent immediately to raise the Sum or which he was confin'd, resolving to set him free; but at the same time resolv'd also to prove how much he merited that Tendernefs; she form'd a Scheme which must infallibly let her into the Secrets of his Heart.

THE Moment she receiv'd the Money, she sent to procure the Freedom of her beloved *Bellamant*, paying off all the Demands that were made on him both by his Creditors and the Prison-Keepers. The Person who was entrusted in the Affair, being charg'd not to appear before *Bellamant*, he had no notice of what was done for him, till the Goaler told him he was at liberty, and that all his Debts were entirely clear'd; and this he was oblig'd to repeat many Times, and confirm the Truth of what he said by Oaths, before that unhappy Gentleman could believe he was in earnest; nor till he saw himself without the Prison-Walls, could he think his Deliverance was real:— But when he found he was indeed free to dispose of himself as he pleas'd, 'tis difficult to determine whether his Joy at being so, or Amazement from what Hand so unexpected a Relief was given, had the most Share in his Soul.— It was Night when he was discharg'd, and too late to go any where but to his Bed, to recover the Fatigue and Disorder which he had suffer'd in his late Lodging; but intended to go in the Morning to all those of his Friends, who he thought
had

had either the Will or the Ability to do so generous an Action. — He was, in spite of his Misfortunes, of a Nature too noble to endure the Weight of such an Obligation, without knowing to whom he was indebted for it: — He was as uneasy to express his Gratitude, as some, after doing such an Action, would have been till they receiv'd the Retributions due to it, and it was the Thoughts by which Means he should arrive at the Knowledge of his Benefactor, which kept him from enjoying that Repose which otherwise he might have taken, and rous'd him from his Bed much earlier than he had ever been accusom'd. He was dress'd, and just going out, when at the Door he met *Ellmour*, who, after accosting him with the usual Civilities of the Morning, told him, he had a Word or two of Consequence to say to him, and desir'd he would walk a little Way from the House. *Bellamant* was of too complaisant a Disposition to refuse a Request of this kind, tho' made him by his Rival, and one who he knew had, since his Acquaintance with *Alinda*, both envy'd and hated him. — When they had walk'd a few Paces, *Bellamant* (*said he*) notwithstanding that Animosity which must of Necessity arise from Competitorship in Love, I was unfeignedly concern'd for your late Misfortune, and should have rejoiced to hear you were deliver'd from it by any other Means than those you are. — But as your present Condition is as far *above* my *Hopes*, as that from which you are freed is *below* my *Fears*, you must not think to triumph over me in all: — Tho' you have got the better of me in *Love*, you shall not in *Revenge*, — at least we'll try who most deserves *Alinda's* Favour.

THE *Hebrew* Language to an *Idiot* could not be less intelligible than were these Words to *Bellamant*; and expressing his Ignorance of what he meant by Queries commonly made use of when one cannot comprehend the Sense of what is spoke, the other imagin'd he was studying for an Evasion to put him off. — It is by such Artifices as these (*cry'd he fiercely*)

fiercely) that you have supplanted my Interest with *Alinda*: But—he was going on, when *Bellamant*, surpris'd more than before, interrupted him, saying, Hold, *Ellmour*, either you come to trifle with me in the Manner you accuse me of, or somebody has misinform'd you. —I doubted not but you were the happy Man for whose sake I was discarded. 'Tis false (*resum'd the other, half-choak'd with rising Passion*) you are not discarded; I am sufficiently convinc'd that was but a Fallacy to amuse the World. —No Woman would for a Man she had not thought of marrying, disburse a Sum such as she paid for you: —And to leave you no room for a Denial of this Truth, —know, that at the Time of your Enlargement, which was about Eleven last Night, myself was in the Prison visiting an unhappy Friend, and saw the Person who was sent to discharge you; which being a Fellow I have often seen at *Alinda's*, and whom I know she employs on several Occasions, immediately inform'd me, it was to no other than that Lady you were oblig'd. —

Is it possible! (*cry'd the astonish'd Bellamant, now half believing the Truth of what he said*) am I then so dear to the excellent *Alinda*? As dear to her (*answer'd Ellmour*) as thou art the contrary to me; —therefore delay no longer the Satisfaction I have vow'd to take, but follow me this Moment, or I will write thee *Coward* on every post in Town. —He turn'd away in speaking these Words; and the other must indeed have been thought to have deserv'd that Name, so detestable to all Men of Spirit, if he had refus'd to follow him: —Severe Prevalence of Custom, which leaves no Medium between the Extreams of Shame, or Guilt! —A Demand of this Nature renders the Man, who not immediately answers it, liable to the most opprobrious Insults; and if he does, to the Punishment the Law inflicts on Duellists.

THE furious *Ellmour* went directly to a Field famous for determining these private Quarrels; and *Bellamant*, at his last Words equally enraged, was not many

many Paces behind him. Both their Swords were in a Moment out; but before either of them had Time to make use of them, their Arms were on a sudden arrested by four or five Men, who from a Covert rush'd out upon them. *Bellamant*, who had engag'd to fight only in Point of Honour, had no Reason to be concern'd at the Disappointment; but *Ellmour* was outrageous at it, not doubting but himself had been the Occasion of this Delay of that Revenge, by not writing to *Alinda*; which, however, he resolv'd to take some other Time.

AFTER having seen that Person in the Prison, and heard in what Manner *Bellamant* had been deliver'd, he imagin'd himself as much assur'd it was done by the Command of *Alinda*, as if he had seen herself there in Person; and full of the most violent Emotions of despairing Love, he resolv'd either to lose his own, or have the Life of his suppos'd more fortunate Rival.— Rest was a Stranger to his Eyes that Night;— he went not to Bed, but with the utmost Impatience watch'd the Dawning of that Morn, which promis'd him either a Period of his Misfortunes by his own Death, or a full Revenge for them, by that of the hated *Bellamant*.—

THE much-expected Hour being at length arriv'd, as he was going out to prosecute his Intentions, he bethought himself, that if it should be his Fortune to fall by the Sword of his Antagonist, he should not die in Peace, losing the Opportunity of complaining to *Alinda* of the Cruelty and Injustice, wherewith he thought himself treated by her.— To that End, therefore, he turn'd back into his Chamber, and writ to to her in this Manner:

To the cruel ALINDA.

THO' there needs no other Weapon than your Scorn to send me from the World, I go to receive a Passport from the Hand of my too happy Rival.— In War,

War, as in Love, he will have all manner of Advantages over me.—— Enliven'd with the transporting Assurances you have given him of rewarded Tenderneſs, your Favour, like a guardian Angel, will hover round his Heart, and ſhield it from my enervate Rage;—— whiſt I, preſs'd down by my Deſpair, can only prove I merited not by Cowardice the Fate I have met:—— Perhaps, before Noon, you will hear the unhappy Ellmour is no more.—— I will not ask your Pity for my Miſfortunes; for had you ever thought me worthy of it, you would not with ſtudy'd Cruelty have inflicted them.— You would not, O too unjuſt Alinda! ſo often, by a ſeeming Kindneſs, have rais'd me to the higheſt Hopes, only to make my Fall the more terrible to be born.— If Bellamant appear'd more deſerving in your Eyes, my Conſtancy and Ardency of Affection merited, at leaſt, to have been fairly dealt with:—— I blame you not for preferring him, tho' a Bankrupt in every thing but your Tenderneſs; but the Deceit with which you have ſo long beguiled my too-believing Soul, is what I do not think you can, on cool Reflection, ever forgive yourſelf.— But I ſhall inſiſt no farther on your Fault, or my Miſfortune: I wiſh you never may have Cauſe to repent it; for believe, your Happineſs is the firſt in the Deſires of him, who living or dying, can never be but

Yours,

ELLMOUR.

P. S. This Moment carries me to my triumphant Rival: If the Juſtice of my Cauſe ſhould weigh down the good Fortune of his, and by my Sword he falls, condemn only your own Miſmanagement, which intereſts Heaven on the Side of the injur'd Ellmour.

THE Surprise and Vexation Alinda was in at the Receipt of this Letter, is not to be expreſs'd: She ran immediately to Euphemia's Chamber, and giving it to her to read, made her an equal Sharer in the ſame Aſtoniſhment

nishment and Fright. — *Alinda*, who had really a great Regard for *Ellmour*, was sensibly touch'd both at his Despair, and the Apprehensions of what it drove him to: But *Euphemia*, whose very Soul was in *Bellamant*, was like one distracted.

SOME Moments were wasted in fruitless Exclamations; but *Alinda*, whose Thoughts were more calm, reminded her they had no Time to lose; that while they were venting unavailing Complaints, both their Lovers might perish by the mistaken Fury of each other. —

THE Person, therefore, who was sent to discharge *Bellamant* from Prison, happening to be in the House, he was immediately dispatch'd, with a strict Charge to get as many of his Friends as he could conveniently call on without Loss of Time, and go with them to the Street where *Bellamant* liv'd, and watch his coming forth.

THE Fellow obey'd the Orders he had receiv'd with all imaginable Diligence; and having procur'd four or five of his Acquaintance, stood at a little Distance from the House, but near enough to observe all that pass'd. — They saw the Rivals meet, perceiv'd they talk'd together, and follow'd them to the Place agreed on to decide the Controversy; taking the Advantage of a Row of Trees, which serv'd them as a Skreen from the Notice of those they follow'd, still keeping on the contrary Side till they found their Presence needful; then, all at once, rush'd out upon them, in the Manner already represented.

SCARCE did the imagin'd Disappointment of his Love give the enrag'd *Ellmour* more Vexation, than this of his intended Vengeance: Despair had made him so regardless of all other Considerations, that he matter'd not what became of himself, if he might but reach the Life of him who, he believ'd, had ruin'd him with *Alinda*; and the Persons who gave this reasonable Interruption, were oblig'd to keep him by Force from flying on *Bellamant*. — Having parted them with much Difficulty, some of them in a manner forc'd *Ell-*

mour to leave the Place, while the rest attended *Bellamant* home to his Lodging.

IT was not till after *Ellmour* was entirely out of Sight, that the Person who had manag'd this Affair appear'd, being order'd to the contrary by the Ladies, not doubting but if he were seen by that Gentleman, it would very much encrease his Fury: But as soon as he came to his Lodgings, he sent himself to perform the other Part of his Task, which was given him before there seem'd any Cause for employing him in this, and was the Reason for which he was sent for by *Alinda*.

IT was to tell *Bellamant*, that he was oblig'd for his Relief to a Lady who had seen him but by Chance, and had never spoke to him; but, charm'd with the Beauties of his Person, had endeavour'd to make an Enquiry into his Circumstances, and by that Means came to be told how unfortunate they were.

THIS threw *Bellamant* again into his former Pexterity; he was almost convinc'd by the Words and Behaviour of *Ellmour*, that it was to *Alinda* he had ow'd that Obligation, and had been brought to believe, that it was only to make trial of his Faith, or some other Whim, that had induced her to write to him in the Manner she had done; nor could he yet assure himself it was not so, till putting the Matter home to this Intelligencer, and repeating to him what *Ellmour* had told him, and the Occasion of his Resentment to him, the other assur'd him by many Oaths, as he very truly might, that it was to a Woman vastly different in Form, Humour, and Fortune, from *Alinda*, that he was indebted for the late Favour he had receiv'd.

ALINDA (said he) is vastly tall; the other is of a middle Stature: *Alinda* has, indeed, a Fortune which might inable her to have conferr'd this Obligation on you, had she been so dispos'd; but the other has an Estate of more than three Times as much. He then proceeded to inform him for what Reason the Jealousy of *Ellmour* had been alarm'd, acknowledging he frequently

quently had done Business for *Alinda*, but that he was also employ'd by many other Ladies beside her.

BUT, continu'd he, I need give myself no farther Trouble to confute this mistaken Opinion; the Lady to whom you are so much oblig'd, is desirous of receiving your Thanks this Evening in *St. James's Park*; the most unfrequented Walk in it being that by *Rosamond's Pond*, you will find her there: She designs to come mask'd, but the Sign shall be a white Handkerchief in her Hand; which, as you come near, she will let fall, to give you an Occasion of taking it up, and accosting her. — I doubt not but when you meet, you will be more effectually convinc'd, than all I can say will have the Power to make you.

'TIS easy to believe *Bellamant* receiv'd the Assurance of an *Eclaircissement* of so mysterious an Adventure with no small Satisfaction; and begging Pardon for insisting so much on the Truth of what the mistaken Jealousy of *Ellmour* had suggested to him, assur'd his Informer, he would not fail to be at the Place at the Time appointed; and entreated also, that if he acquainted the Lady with his Unbelief, he would also make her sensible of the seeming Reasons he had for it; which the other faithfully promising, took Leave.

NEVER did the Hours move so heavily away, as those of *Bellamant's* did, till the obliging Dial told him it was Six. — Then, with the Wings of impatient Curiosity, which are sometimes, in both Sexes, more swift than those of Love, he flew to the *Rendezvous*; and had not been there above a Minute or two before the punctual Lady appear'd: The Signal being given, he took it up, and with an Air, which at once express'd Gallantry and Humility, presenting it to her, Madam (said he) how fortunate am I to do you this little Service, which, if no ill Planet intervenes to thwart my more benignant ones, may be an Introduction to some of greater Consequence.

BELLAMANT (answer'd she) is so accusom'd to say fine Things, that I wonder not he has them at

Command for a Woman, who, 'tis probable, he may believe expects them from him, I am much mistaken, Madam (resum'd he) if the divine Person I am now talking to, has not a Right to expect every thing from *Bellamant*. — It is to your Goodness I owe much more than my Life; but as I have nothing else to offer, I beg you will dispose of that. — If I should be of a Humour to take you at your Word (interrupted she, hastily) I am afraid you would very much repent your Complaisance. Far from it (rejoin'd he) nor is it more than Justice for me to offer you what is your own: Your Goodness has redeem'd me from a worse than *Turkish* Slavery; and I am now your Property, Part of your Fortune, to be disposed of as you shall think most fit. — Haste then (continu'd he, with a low Bow) my charming Mistress, to employ my Zeal; you should not find a Task so difficult, I would not be proud to obey. Suppose (reply'd the Lady) I should enjoin you one, the Offices of which would be as lasting as your Life, — with what Zeal, with what Pleasure, would you obey a Command so rigorous? — But to set Raillery apart (continu'd she, in a more serious Accent) could you on my Recommendation, venture to marry a Woman whom you have never seen, and have no other Security than my Word, that she is not disagreeable, old, ill-natur'd, vain, proud, and has all the ill Qualities that can render a Person of our Sex odious to yours. If she has half your Goodness (cry'd he, in a seeming Rapture) it will be sufficient Compensation for the Want of all other Charms; and I cannot believe that you, so eminently stored with it yourself, and from whom I have receiv'd such unmerited Favours, would impose any thing on me, which would not be an Addition to the Happiness you have already conferr'd. Well then (resum'd she) I will not keep you long in Suspence, be at your Lodging to-morrow about this Hour, and I will send a Messenger, who shall conduct you to the Lady I have made choice of for you. — In the mean time, if you would preserve the good Opinion I have

of

of you, endeavour not at an Enquiry, which would be unavailing to you, and entirely disoblige me; which *Bellamant* having assur'd her he would not do, she took her leave.

I BELIEVE I may spare myself the Pains of telling my Reader, that this Lady was no other than *Euphemia*, who, burning with Impatience to see her dear *Bellamant* (now half restor'd to her former good Opinion) had taken these Measures: Neither have I occasion to endeavour at a Representation of those Emotions both felt in Expectation of what the appointed Hour should bring forth; which being arrived, the Messenger, who had all along been employ'd in the Management of this Business, and who had acquitted himself so well in the Trust reposed in him, came to the Lodgings of *Bellamant*, to perform the last Part of it; and finding him ready, conducted him to a very large and magnificently furnish'd House: — Several Footmen in rich Liveries, attended in the Hall; and every thing had the Appearance rather of the Palace of a Dutches, than the Apartment of a private Gentlewoman. After having shewn him upStairs into a fine Dining-Room, he took his Leave, telling him the Lady of the Dwelling would wait on him immediately.

BELLAMANT had scarce Time to think whether the Owner of this stately House was the Lady to whom he ow'd his Liberty, or that which he had promis'd to resign it to, or if they were not both one, when he perceiv'd the Lady who he had entertain'd in the Park, come toward him. She was mask'd, as before; but by her Air and Stature, he knew her to be the same.

I WILL not go about to apologize (*said she*) for concealing my Face; I have Reasons for it, which, when you are acquainted with, I know you will forgive: — In the mean time, I entreat you will be seated, for I have that to say, which will require your utmost Attention. — You must therefore lay aside all your accusom'd Gallantry and Complaisance, and answer

to the Demand I have to make you, with the same Sincerity as you would Heaven, at your latest Hour.

SHE pronounc'd these Words in an Accent so very grave, as gave a sensible Alarm to the Person they were address'd to; but it was infinitely increas'd, when after he had bound himself by Oath to conceal nothing she desir'd to know. — I cannot doubt (*said she*) but you are sufficiently acquainted with the World, to be assur'd, such Actions as you have found from me, proceed only from *Love*. — You are certainly convinc'd, that to make your Happiness, is the Way to compleat my own; but the uncommon Means I am about to offer, will, perhaps, oblige you to confess my Passion elevated to a Height you before had not the least Notion of. — Your Compliance to espouse a Woman you had never seen, I take as the Effect of *Gratitude*, and am well pleas'd to find that good Quality in the Man I love; but to prove with what a disinterested Affection I regard you, I this Moment discharge you from the Promise I yesterday exacted from you, and will not be oblig'd for a Return of *Love*, to any Motive but *Love*; which since impossible you should feel for a Woman, to whose Face and Humour you are utterly a Stranger, I beg to know if you are entirely free from Prepossession, and at liberty to receive the Impression I would wish to inspire. Here she ceas'd; and *Bellamant*, all Confusion and Amazement, had not immediately the Power of replying, any otherwise than by a deep Sigh; which giving her some Reason to imagine she had touch'd him in the tenderest Part, I am afraid (*resumed she*) that I have ask'd a Question you have too much Complaisance to answer with the Sincerity I wish.

BUT to convince you that nothing can oblige me so much as Truth, I solemnly protest, by the Power whom we adore, by all Things sacred above, or dear below, I will not only relinquish all that Power your *Gratitude* has given me over your Affections, but to the utmost of my Power, endeavour to forward the Reward of them with that happier Woman
whom

whom your Judgment or Inclination prefers to the rest of her Sex.

I HAVE been told (*continued she, perceiving he was yet silent*) that of late you have made your Addresses to a very fine Lady: I think they call her *Alinda*.

AH, Madam (*interrupted he, with a visible Disorder in his Face*) would to God all that labour in the Pangs of hopeless Love, felt no more than I was ever capable of knowing for that Lady. Then it is to some other (*cried she, hastily*) that you are indebted for your Sensibility of the tender Passion.

THESE Words seem'd to plunge *Bellamant* into greater Confusion than before, a burning Blush spread itself all over his Face, and his whole Frame seem'd to tremble with convulsive Agonies.

SPEAK (*said the Lady, no less disorder'd, tho' for far different Reasons*) by the Perturbations which you in vain endeavour to conceal, I am sufficiently convinc'd that you have lov'd; — that you do love with an unvanquishable Passion, and which your Gratitude, and perhaps, the Interest you may imagine to yourself in flattering my Wishes, has hitherto prevented you from revealing: — But I conjure you, by the Oath you have taken, to resolve me in whatever I ask'd, to let me know the Truth of this Affair; and by that myself has sworn, again assure you, that nothing you can do will so much oblige me: — Tell me then the Truth without Disguise.

SHE spoke these last Words with such an Emphasis, as shew'd she was infinitely concern'd in his Reply; and sure never Man suffer'd more in an Uncertainty what was best for him to do, than he did in this Moment; but being of a Temper naturally open and sincere, however some Circumstances of Life had obliged him sometimes to disguise the Truth, and being adjur'd to it now with so pressing an Earnestness, he resolv'd to obey her, whatever should be the Event.

SINCE you command me, Madam (*said he*) by Adjurations too powerful to be refused, I must no longer

longer conceal what, perhaps, the Knowledge of will add to the Perplexity I see you are already involv'd in:—I cannot deny, Madam, but I have lov'd;—that I do love;—but at the same Time assure you, that 'tis a hopeless Flame; for tho' bless'd far beyond my Merits, with the Affection of my Charmer, my cruel Fortune has laid an indissoluble Bar between us, and curses me in an eternal Absence. — All I have to wish is, that she may be enabled to forget me, as I have long, tho' vainly, endeavour'd to do her.

'Tis generously confess'd (*cried the Lady, in a faint Voice*) and since you have gone thus far, think me not unworthy of the remaining Part of the Secret: — What could happen to separate Hearts by mutual Tendernefs united?

THE Malevolence of ill Fate (*replied he*) My unhappy Circumstances requir'd a wife's Fortune to retrieve; which, at my first Acquaintance with her, who soon became the Mistress of my Soul, I imagin'd she was in Possession of:—But, too late, alas! I found the contrary; and that her Parents had been able to leave her no more than a thousand Pounds, which was a Trifle to what my Wants requir'd. — Living with an Aunt who was vastly rich, I had Hope, since she allow'd of my Pretensions, she would considerably add to her Fortune; but I was deceiv'd, she offer'd me no more than to double what was left her; and that was ineffectual to have redeem'd my Mortgage, without which both must have been wretched. — The extreme Passion I had for her, render'd it impossible for me to wish to make her a Partner in my Misfortunes: I resolv'd to bear my Load of Woe alone, with this additional one, of being for ever separated from all I lov'd on Earth: — But, ashamed of declaring the Truth, yet bent to obey the Dictates of Generosity, I shew'd an Act of Self-denial, which there are but few Parallels of; and when every thing was preparing to make me the happiest of Mankind, tore myself away from all I lov'd, — from all I ever can love with that Ardency of Affection;

on; and to leave her untouch'd with my Calamity, entailed an endless Curse upon myself.

I HAVE but one Thing more to ask (*said the Lady*) Is the Name of her you lov'd a Secret I must not know? Nothing, Madam (*answered he*) must be denied to your forgiving Goodness. She was call'd *Euphemia*, born in *Wiltshire*, and of a Parentage far above her Fortune: But, to go about to describe the thousand Charms, the thousand Graces which shone about her Form, inspir'd her Conversation, and render'd her Temper the sweetest and most obliging in the World, were a Task as impossible to perform, as it would be imprudent to attempt.

You shall not need — (*cried the Lady, throwing off her Mask, and discovering herself to be the Person he spoke of*) you shall not need, my dearest *Bellamant*; it is no Matter what the *Person* of *Euphemia* is, her Fate I am sure is glorious in the discover'd Constancy of the charming *Bellamant*.

WITH these Words she threw herself into his Arms, who, with the strong Surprise, the sudden Rush of overwhelming Extasy, was, for some Moments, quite incapable of Speech or Motion: — But when recover'd enough to do it, how many Efforts did he make to utter what he felt? In vain, alas! for 'twas unspeakable! But what Language wanted Words to express, Embraces, Kisses, rapturous Grasplings, and all the Excess of fond endearing Passion very well supply'd. —

THE first wild Tumults of their mutual Transport being a little over, *Alinda*, who had been conceal'd in the next Room to observe what pass'd, came in to wish them Joy; and, at their Leisure, every Particular of this Transaction was related. —

IN a few Days their Marriage was solemniz'd with a Magnificence suitable to the Tenderness they had for each other. —

ELLMOUR, of all the Persons concern'd in the Affair, was the only distressed Person; who, being inform'd of what had happen'd, and convinc'd of his

Mistake, despair'd of ever being able to obtain a Pardon from *Alinda*, for the Rashness of his ungovern'd Jealousy. —

BUT *Bellamant* and *Euphemia*, too well convinc'd by Experience what a Heart truly touch'd with Love must feel in the Resentment of the belov'd Object, pleaded so successfully in his Behalf, that he was again receiv'd into Favour; and in a few Weeks after the Celebration of their own Marriage, were invited to that of his with his adorable *Alinda*. —

THUS was *Constancy* on all Sides rewarded; and by the continu'd Tenderness they had for each other after Marriage, gave a Proof that Possession does not always extinguish Desire, and surpris'd the World with an Example, which I am afraid more will admire than imitate.

F I N I S.



THE

THE
Fatal SECRET:

OR,
CONSTANCY in Distress.

By Mrs. ELIZA HAYWOOD.

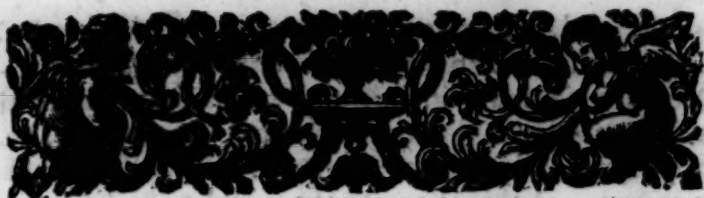
*Beauty, thou art a fair, but fading Flower,
The tender Prey of every coming Hour :
In Youth, thou, Comet-like, art gaz'd upon ;
But art portentous to thyself alone.*

SEDLEY.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

SECRET

CONSTANT IN DISTANCE



THE Fatal SECRET:

O R,

CONSTANCY in Distress.

NOTHING is so generally coveted by Womankind, as to be accounted beautiful; yet nothing renders the Owner more liable to Inconveniences. She who is fond of Praise, is in great Danger of growing too fond of the Praiser; and if by chance she does defend herself from the Attacks made on her *Virtue*, it is almost a Miracle if her *Reputation* receives no Prejudice by them: And a Woman who is very much admir'd for the Charms of her *Face*, ought with infinitely more Reason be so for those of her *Prudence*, who preserves both amidst so many Enemies as Love and Opportunity will raise against them. For one Woman that has made her Fortune by her Beauty, there are a thousand whose utter Destruction it has been. — Some, among a Crowd of Adorers, are so long determining which shall be the happy Man, that Time stealing every Day away some Part of their Attractions, they grow, at last depriv'd of all, and on a sudden find themselves abandon'd

don'd, and not worth a Bow from those whose Hearts and Knees bended at their Approach before.— Others, puzzled with a too great Variety, have their Judgments dimm'd with the Confusion of Ideas, and more frequently make Choice of the worst than the contrary.— A third Sort there are, who, by becoming a publick Toast, assume to themselves such an Air of Insolence and Self-sufficiency, that their Behaviour forfeits the Conquest which their Eyes had gain'd, and they grow in a little Time rather Objects of Ridicule than Admiration.— Numberless are the Dangers to which a young Creature, more than ordinarily fair, is incident; and even where there is the greatest Stock of Virtue, Modesty, and good Sense, it sometimes is the Occasion of Misfortunes which are not to be warded off by all those Guards.

ANADEA, the only Daughter of a Gentleman of high Extractions, but mean Fortune, in *Paris*, was so much celebrated for her exceeding Beauty, that it grew almost a Proverb; and it was a common Saying, when any one would praise a Lady, to cry, She is as handsome as *Anadea*! as fine shap'd as *Anadea*!— Nor were the Charms of her Conversation less amiable than those of her Person: Her indulgent Father, though in his Youth he had lavish'd the best Part of his Patrimony, and had little to depend on but what accrued from a Post he held at Court, was now so good a Husband in other Things, as to afford her a very liberal Education. There was no Accomplishment fit for a young Lady, that she was not Mistress of; and she made such good Use of her Time, that before she arrived at the Age of Sixteen, she acquir'd more than the most ingenious of her Fellow-Learners could do at twenty-four. Nor confin'd her Studies to that Part of Education common to her own Sex: She had an extensive Genius, and emulated the other in their Search of Knowledge; she went a great way in the Mathematics; understood several Languages perfectly well; and had she persever'd in Application, might have been as eminent for her Learning, as the celebrated *Madam*

Dacier:

Dacier : But she being now a Woman, and her Father's Age, and some Infirmities incident to it, making him believe he had not long to live, and consequently desirous of seeing his beloved Child dispos'd of before his Death, induced him to entertain her often with Discourse of Marriage. He was continually pressing her to let him know which, of the many who had offer'd themselves, was most agreeable to her Mind; but finding her Inclinations far from being as he desired, and that she rather seem'd to listen to such Conversations through Obedience to him, than any Liking to change her Condition, he grew extremely chagrind at it, and at last told her, that he was resolv'd on her Marriage, and as his Indulgence had prevail'd upon him to give her the Choice of which of her Admirers should be the Man, he expected she should, without any farther Evasions, determine. This was the first Shock *Anadrea* had ever found to ruffle her Calm of Life; but, unable to stand it, well knowing her Father, in spite of all the Tendernefs he had for her, was not of a Humour to endure Disobedience in those he had Power over, answered him in this Manner. — Since 'tis your Pleasure, Sir, that I must be a Wife, I shall endeavour to conquer my Inclinations, which I confess tend to a single Life; but as it is your Place to command, and mine to obey, I beg you will exert that Power in every thing; direct me to whom I must resign my Liberty, and I shall yield with as little Reluctance as Nature will permit. These Words were not perfectly pleasing to him they were address'd to; he lov'd her too well, to oblige her to do any thing to which she was averse; and to perswade her that it was wholly for her Interest to marry, omitted no Argumens which he thought might be conducive to that End: He represented to her the Dangers of a young Woman's being left alone in the World, expos'd both to Temptations and Insults; and reminded her, that when he was gone, how impossible it would be for her to support herself in the Manner she had liv'd, in so moving a Strain, and expressed so tender a Grief that he was unable to leave her a

Fortune

Fortune suitable to her Birth, and the Education he had given her, that she had no longer any thing to reply in Contradiction to the Justice of what he alledg'd; and if she was not in reality convinced, she chose to appear so, rather than bear to see the Sorrows which his paternal Care, and soft Commiseration for the Apprehension of what Misfortunes she might fall into, involved him in. — She assured him at last, that she was perfectly easy, and ready to fulfil his Commands; but as to the Choice of a Husband, begg'd he would not leave it to her, telling him, with a great deal of Sincerity, that as she had no particular *Aversion* to any Man, so among the Number of those who had made Pretensions, she was not capable of feeling any particular *Regard*, but would endeavour to increase a Respect for him who he should think most worthy. The Old Gentleman, finding himself oblig'd to name the Person, was not much less at a Loss than his Daughter, for there were several of equal Merit who aim'd at the Blessing of obtaining her: However, thinking he had done enough for once, in getting her Consent to marry, he deferred letting her know to whom, till another Time. — But it was not many Days before the *Chevalier De Semar* gain'd the Advantage of all his Rivals. — He was descended from a very noble Family, which was no small Recommendation to the Father of *Anadea*, had a handsome Estate, and was a Gentleman of known Sobriety and good Conduct. — He was the Person fixed on; and *Anadea*, when she heard it, having nothing to offer in Opposition, the o'erjoyed Lover was soon made acquainted with the Happiness designed him, and every thing was getting ready with all possible Expedition for the Solemnity. The Time which the necessary Preparations took up, *Anadea* pass'd in modelling her Soul, as much as possible, to be pleas'd with the State for which she was intended. — The *Chevalier* had many good Qualities, and she endeavoured to add to them in Imagination a thousand more. Never did any Woman take greater

Pains

Pains to resist the Dictates of Desire, than she did to create them: But alas! she had not yet seen those Charms which were necessary to inspire the Passion which alone could make the Loss of her beloved Liberty a Blessing: And though she joined in that Opinion she found the whole World had of him, that her intended Husband was a perfect fine Gentleman, yet she had it not in her Power to feel any of those soft Emotions, those Impatiencies for his Absence, those tender Thrillings in his Presence, nor any of those agreeable Perplexities which are the unfailing Consequences of Love; and without which she was sensible, both by Reading, and her own Observation on others, there could be no true Extasies in Possession. Not all his Assiduity, not all his Tenderness, not all her own Efforts, could bring her to any more than to be barely satisfied with her Lot; and she began, at length, to lay the Blame on her own want of Sensibility, and to imagine she had not a Heart fram'd like those of other Women. — Happy, at least contented, might she have been, had she never had Cause to change her Sentiments. But soon, too soon, the luckless Moment came, which was to convince her, that of all her Sex, none was more capable of receiving a soft Impression, nor, for all her Knowledge, none less able to repel it.

HAP'NING to be one Evening at the House of a young Lady of her particular Acquaintance, the Count *Blessure*, Son to a Marquis of that Name, being lately arriv'd at *Paris*, whence he had been absent some time on his Travels, made his Visit there at the same Time. It was the Sight of him that first gave her to know there was a Possibility for her to wish to be a Wife, and if her design'd Husband had been like him, she might, with equal Ardour, equal Impatiency, have long'd for the happy Hour which should resign her to him. — The Count, indeed, had every thing which could excuse a Woman's sudden Liking; for besides the Charms of his Person (which were hardly to be equall'd) there was something irresistibly engaging

engaging in his Conversation; — something so very graceful, yet withal so sweet, that it was almost an Impossibility to be in his Company without being more than ordinarily pleas'd with it: — But, beside the Attractions he had for the Generality of those who knew him, all his Notions and Sentiments of Things, and his Manner of expressing what he thought, were more particularly adapted to move the Soul of *Anadea*: — He had an uncommon Delicacy in his Nature; so had she: — A grave Chearfulness, or, if you will, a gay Solidity in his Behaviour; so had she. — In fine, never were two Persons of different Sexes so alike, so fram'd to please each other. — The natural Boldness of Manhood was in him sweetly temper'd with a more than female Softness; and the Tenderness and Bashfulness incident to Womankind, in her was mingled with something of a manly Majesty of Thought, commanding what she perswaded, while he seemed to beseech what he enforc'd. — Both were so equally inflam'd by each other, that 'tis hard to say which had the Start in the great Race of Passion. Yet neither Heart was sensible of its Happiness; for though both were so much accustomed to charm, that it was almost as common to be ador'd as to be seen, yet the prodigious Awe which Love always inspires, kept either from believing they had the Power of conquering here.

CARDS being propos'd by the Lady of the House, they went to *Ombre*; but little were the Count or *Anadea* capable of managing their Game: Never was such distracted Playing; they threw away their *Matadores*, and *Punto* was no more remember'd. They play'd on however, and *Anadea*, quite lost in Thought and Contemplation, forgot the Time of Night, and thought not of removing till the *Chevalier*, having some Hours waited for her coming home, in hopes of paying his Devoirs, was sent by her Father, to see the Reason of her staying abroad so much later than she had been accustomed. — His Entrance rous'd both these amiable Persons from the pleasing Dreams they

they had been in : *Anadea*, seeing them together, had the greater Opportunity of making a Comparison between them ; but, Oh ! she found there was none ! — This new Charmer had in every thing the Advantage ! — And though the *Chevalier* was a Man who might justly be accounted very agreeable, yet in the Presence of the unequall'd *Blessure*, he had nothing which seemed worthy Consideration ! How destructive to her Peace was now her Delicacy of Taste, and penetrating Judgment ! She now knew there was something more excellent in Man than she had imagined ; but at the same Time knew the Discovery promised nothing but Despair. She was pre-engaged to another by all the binding Vows that Words could form ; and if he should happen to regard her with Eyes of Love, which yet was not in her Thoughts, it was not in her Power to gratify his or her own Desires. The *Count* was in little less Perplexity ; he easily perceived by the Freedom with which the *Chevalier* entertained her, that he was a Lover publickly allow'd ; and though till after they had taken Leave he knew not how far the Matter had gone, yet he immediately suspected enough to make him sensible what kind of galling, grinding Pains those are which Jealousy inflicts.

IN Anxieties, such as hopeless Lovers feel, did the discontented *Anadea* pass the Night : — She could not avoid wishing, though there was not the least Room for her to imagine a Possibility of what she wish'd : — She could not help praying, yet thought those Prayers a Sin. — Her once calm and peaceful Bosom was now all Hurry and Confusion : — The Esteem which she had been long labouring to feel for the *Chevalier*, was now turn'd to Aversion and Disdain ; and the Indifference she had for all Mankind, now converted into the most violent Passion for one. — Far from imagining what Effect her Charms had wrought on the lovely Object of her new Desires, she thought she could be contented to live a single Life, and knew so little of the encroaching Nature
of

of the Passion she had entertained, that she believed she should never languish for any greater Joy, than that she might, without a Crime, indulge Contemplation with the Idea of his Perfections; and to destroy that pleasing Theory by marrying with another, whom then she could not, without failing in her Duty, rob of one single Wish, was more terrible to her than the worst of Deaths. — Confounded what to do, or rather wild that there was nothing she could do that might be of Service to her in an Exigence like this, her Mind grew all a Chaos, and the unintermitting Inquietudes of her Soul not permitting any Repose, she was so much disorder'd the next Day, that she had a very good Pretence to keep her Chamber, and receive no Visits. — If a Person in her Condition ever finds Ease, 'tis when they are alone; for Company, Noise, and Hurry, though they are ordinary Recipe's for Melancholy, are so far from working the Effect they are design'd for, that, on the contrary, they but increase the Malady: Love and Grief are Passions too potent to be struggled with, and too obstinate for Perswasion: — Opposition makes them mad: — They grow fiercer by Restraint: — The Patient is himself his own best Physician; and if by soothing his Disease he does not absolutely cure it, he, at least, prevents the Tortures it would otherwise occasion: And it has been often seen, that in giving a Loose to the Passion, the Spirit has evaporated of itself; though this never happens but in a weak and flashy Mind, and could not be the Case of our *Anadea*. As she was not easily wounded by the Darts of Love, so having once received them, could not suffer them to be torn out, without breaking at the same Time the Strings of Life: — But in the Midst of all the Perplexity she was involv'd in, she now and then found a Mixture of Delight. — Ah! with what kind Deceits does Love sometimes beguile the Imagination! — What pleasing Chimera's does a Fancy, fired with that tender Flame, create! — What airy Prospects of unsubstantial Blessings present themselves

themselves to the deluded Eye, and cheat wild Thought into an Extasy ! *Anadea* had, in her Intervals of Pain, some of these Day-Dreams ; she would sit and think that if the *Chevalier De Semar* should see a Woman whose superior Charms, or Fortune, should break off the Match, near as it was expected to be, or if some sudden Illness, or Accident, should take him from her by Death, how perfectly at liberty she then should be to indulge a more pleasing Passion for the lovely *Count*. — From this would she proceed farther, and think, that if thus free, there was a Possibility for him to regard her in an equal Tenderneſs, in what Manner she should behave, so as to secure his Heart. — Then would she form long Discourses (such as 'tis probable he would indeed have made, had he been bleſt with an Opportunity) and answer them again. — Nay, sometimes Contemplation, ravished with the rapturous Image, would carry her to a Confession of her Love ; she yielded, fainted, almost died with Pleasure in the *Theory* of that Joy, the Practice of which she had ne'er experienced : — Then all at once, remembering it was but illuſive, ſtart from the fallacious Transport, and wake to real Woe and Bitterneſs of Heart.

BUT while she endured all this, and more than is in the Power of Language to expreſs, she had her Revenge on the charming *Count* for the Inquietudes he had occasioned her, in as ample a Manner as she could have wiſhed. — Being fully informed of the Truth of her Circumstances, by the Lady at whose Houſe they had met, the Chagrin this Account gave him is ſcarce to be conceived : — The narrow Fortune he knew her Father was able to give her, was of itſelf ſufficient to make him uneaſy, for well he knew the Marquis deſigned him for more exalted Hopes, and would never conſent he ſhould marry a Woman whose only Portion was her Wit and Beauty. — But, Love would have enabled him to get over that Difficulty : The Hiſtory of her Engagement to the *Chevalier* was the diſtracting Point : — He found immediately

mediately that his Passion would enable him to run all Risques for her sake, and dare all the Dangers which Disobedience might create, if in Exchange for Grandeur, Wealth, and Favour, he could be possessed of her; but the Impossibility there appeared of gaining her, was near throwing him into Despair.— He knew that there was not many Days before that fatal one arrived, which was to take from him the Power of even wishing to be hers, without being guilty of a Crime against her Honour, which he had too much Tenderness for her to suffer him to think of.— He knew not but her Affections might go hand-in-hand with her Duty in this Marriage; but in case they did not, which he was willing to hope, yet the Character he had heard of her Discretion and Modesty, made it difficult for him to flatter himself so far, as to believe she would, on any Consideration, incur the Censure of the Town, by breaking off with a Man to whom so publickly she was known to be engaged.— Thus for a while did the Suggestions of his Despair torment him: But these Agitations were not long thus violent; a Dawn of kinder Fortune at last broke out, and opened a more delightful Scene.— The Consideration of his Quality, his vast Estate, and some little Knowledge of his superior Perfections, seemed to console him with the Imagination that her Heart might not be so fixed in Tenderness to the *Chevalier*, but that such a Number of Advantages might loose the Chain.— Resolving to make the Experiment, he summoned all his Thoughts to assist him in the doing it:— He could not for a long Time decide, whether it were best to propose the Matter to the Father of *Anadea*, or herself: He knew very well, that old People are ambitious of their Childrens Grandeur, and did not doubt but the Title he was able to confer on her, would weigh a great deal with him; but then he had heard so much of that Gentleman's Honour, and steady Adherence to his Friend and Promise, that it deterred him; and, with Reason, believing that if he were refused there, he should never

get an Opportunity of applying to the young Lady, he chose to make the first Declaration to herself: The gaining her Affections being the material Point, he considered all others of little Consequence.— Having fixed his Determination thus, he set himself down to frame a Letter to her; the Contents of which were in this Manner:

To the Divine ANADEA.

WHERE the Ill is desperate, desperate Remedies are allow'd: Wanting the Glory of a long Train of Services to recommend my Passion, I should not dare, thus unknown, unmeriting, to make a Declaration of the Kind I am about to do, to the most excellent of her Sex, without being driven to it by an indefensible Necessity.— Self-preservation is the great Law of Nature: I can but die by your Disdain; and certain Death attends me, whenever you give the Chevalier a Blessing, which (if my good Genius had brought me to Paris timely enough to have given Proofs of a Passion which is not to be equal'd) you must in Justice, have confess'd him less worthy of possessing.— I have seen you, have talk'd to you; O most adorable Anadea! have been a Witness of the Wonders of your Wit, and Beauty; and sure there needs no more to make a Soul, capable of distinguishing Perfection, feel for you all that Love inspires.— This is a Truth you must not know yourself to disbelieve.— 'Tis easy for me to convince you I adore you; but, Oh! impossible to make you judge how much! That is a Task which the short Time allowed for my Probation, cannot accomplish.— Would any lucky Accident interpose, and for a while suspend my Rival's Happiness, I might, perhaps, do something should make you own I merit not your Scorn.— Injurious Fortune! And, O my guardian Angel, too remissive of thy Charge! why had I not some secret Warnings of my future Fate? why did I range so long in Foreign Courts, in search of trifling Pleasures, and unavailing Knowledge, while my
eternal

eternal Ruin was at home contriving?—while all that could make me blest'd, was disposing to another?—But I grow wild! pardon the Frenzy which Despair occasions. My Death will soon be the Consequence of my Presumption, if you continue your cruel Resolution of giving yourself to De Semar: Then, 'tis possible, you will forgive and pity the

Unfortunate

(But to the last Moment of his Life)

The Adoring

DE BLESSURE,

P. S. Let your own Words pronounce my Doom, and I shall bless your Goodness.

To form any just Notion of what *Anadea* felt at the Receipt of this Billet, one must be possessed of all those burning Passions with which the Sight of him who sent it had enflamed her Soul.—The utmost Extravagance of Joy and Surprise, at first invaded her; but sinking by Degrees, gave way to Apprehensions, which to those who are acquainted with the Catastrophe of her unhappy Story, may be accounted Omens.—Though to be lov'd by *Blessure* was the highest Wish of her desiring Soul; though at the first Discovery that she was so, a Flood of Extasy ran thrilling through all her Veins, and each warm Fibre glow'd with immoderate Pleasure; yet Horror fill'd her Heart, a Terror not to be accounted for succeeded: Cold Tremblings seized her Limbs, her Eyes distilled unwilling Drops, and all the Opposites of Joy had a Vicissitude of equal Power.—Great part indeed of this might be thought to proceed from the Confusion she was in how to behave in an Exigence so dangerous either to her eternal Peace of Mind or the Decorum of that Duty and Modesty she had hitherto

thereto taken so much Care to preserve. — Though Love was a Passion she had but lately entertained, she found it grown too strong for Controul; and Reserve, though long habitual to her, now difficult to be maintained. — How hard was it to resolve what Course to take? She must determine either to do the extremest Violence to her Inclinations, or forfeit all Title to a Character she esteem'd equal to her Life. — Ah! how dreadful is the Conflict, when Love and Honour rack the divided Soul? — How small the Relief we can receive from Reason? Poor *Anadea*, though by Strength of Mind more than most of her Sex, enabled to endure it, could not for a long Time get through this Dilemma, and the Messenger who brought the Cause of it, was obliged to remind her three or four Times that he waited for an Answer, before she could enough submit to the Suggestions of either her Passion, or Prudence, to be able to make one. But when she did, it was as follows.

TO COUNT BLESSURE.

My Lord,

THOUGH a Maid in my Circumstances might very well be excused returning any Answer to a Letter of that Nature I have received from your Lordship, yet I choose rather to incur the Censure of Indiscret, than Ungrateful; which latter I must be, if I did not acknowledge the Obligation your too good Opinion of my little Merit has conferred on me; and since by those who have the Disposal of me, I am deprived of every thing to pay you back but Thanks, intreat you will accept of them, when offered in the sincerest Manner, by,

My Lord,
Your Lordship's,
Most humble Servant,

ANADEA.

THE Force she put on herself in writing in this Manner, when she would have given almost her Life to have pour'd out the tender over-powering Languishments, that took up all her Soul, may justly make her an Object of Admiration: — It would be endless to represent the various Turns of disorder'd Emotions which run through her troubled Mind after the Departure of the Messenger. — Sometimes she wished a second Sollicitation; — at others she trembled, for fear she should again be put to so severe a Trial, which she could not promise herself to go through with the same Fortitude and Resolution as before. — However, I believe most Women will imagine she would have thought it a greater Misfortune, had the Count here ceased his Prosecution, than all she could sustain from the Continuance of it: But he was not a Lover so easily repulsed; he found in that little Note great Matter of Consolation; — he interpreted her telling him, *Since deprived by those who had the Power over her, from every thing but Thanks*, that her consenting to a Marriage with the Chevalier *De Semar*, was the Effect only of that Duty she owed her Father, and that her own Inclination had nothing to do in that Affair; for if it had (said he to himself) she would have added, *by my own Choice, as well as the Power of those who have the Disposal of me.* — This Imagination emboldened him to write immediately; and before she was certain whether she really desired he should, or not, she received by the same Hand which brought the other, this second Billet.

To the Too-charming and most Adorable
ANADEA.

THE Trouble you have given yourself, divinest Anadea! is a Favour which the unhappy Blessure can never sufficiently acknowledge. I own your Good-
ness

ness not inferior to your other unmatched Charms: Oh! were you half so sensible, as you ought, of that Heaven of Perfections you are Mistress of, you would not thus rashly, thus hastily resign it! — You would at least defer giving my Rival that Profusion of Happiness, which though no Man can be said to deserve, yet some may boast a more justifiable Plea than what proceeds merely from the ingratiating himself to the Favour of others. — 'Tis your own Inclinations only that ought to have the Power of disposing you; and if they speak not in his Favour, O let me conjure you, for your own sake, for the sake of your eternal Peace, not to offer a Violation to those sacred Dictates. — If the Wretch, who presumes to give you this Advice, has not the Power of pleasing, that Softness in your Eyes and Form shews you were not born to be for ever unsusceptible of the Force of Love; and though you ne'er can find an Object worthy of inspiring it, you may hereafter find one to whom your Liking may give a Lustre; and then, how truly unfortunate would you be! — O consider it aright! — Delay a while these Nuptials! — Think 'tis your good Genius warns you! — A little Time, perhaps, may make you know I have not counselled ill! — But whether does my Zeal transport me? — I have declared myself too far interested in this Cause, not to render every thing I urge suspected. — But, by Heaven! by that Heaven which gave you that Transcendency of Charms, and me of Adoration! were I perfectly assur'd, of what I fear, that all that I can do, or all I would do, had I the Power, would never influence your Soul in pity of my Passion, then I would plead as now: — O let Hymen wait, till Love, soft Love, shall introduce him! — But you, perhaps, will say that 'tis already done in favour of the Chevalier. — If so, I have indeed nothing to object, but what may justly be imputed to a too partial Wish for my own Happiness, and Envy of another's. — Silence me then at once; confess your Passion for this fortunate, this triumphant Man! and end the Boldness, the Sufferings which occasioned it, and

the Life of him, who without Anadea, thinks Death a Blessing.

Your everlasting Votary,

BLESSURE.

ANADEA now perceived whence he had drawn his Encouragement to write again, but was not so much displeased at it, as she would have perswaded herself she was: And her Duty every Moment growing weaker, as her Passion stronger, she with much less Reluctance than she had felt in answering the former, sent him a Reply in these Words:

TO COUNT BLESSURE.

My Lord,

I AM so little accustomed to a Correspondence of this Nature, that 'tis not to be wondered at that I should lay myself open to many Disadvantages:— But as much a Stranger as I am to Gallantry, I am yet a much greater to Dissimulation; and though it may be the most prudent to pretend I have given my Heart where I shortly must my Hand, yet I cannot forbear confessing, with that Freedom you require, that it is to the Chevalier's future Behaviour he must owe that Part of me.— The rest my Father has an indisputable Right to dispose of, as he thinks fit; and however averse my Inclinations may be, Obedience, as it is sometimes the severest, is sure the most valuable Part of a Child's Duty; and this Task I shall always enjoin myself. If I find any Difficulties in the Performance, the greater Glory will it be to conquer them: And it is by such Proofs of Virtue alone, that I can hope to merit any of those Praises you have so profusely lavished on me, and for which I must ever acknowledge myself,

My Lord,
Your Lordship's

Most Oblig'd,

ANADEA.

IT was with an Infinity of Transport that the Count received this Assurance from her own Hand, that her intended Marriage with the *Chevalier* was not the Effect of her Choice.— His Joy had been immoderate, had not the latter Part of her Letter, wherein she expresses so strict a Resolution to follow Duty, something abated it.— He did absolutely despair, however; and knowing he had no Time to lose, early the next Morning a Messenger from him saluted her with these Lines :

To the for-ever-ador'd ANADEA.

CAN you then, O more than Angel, at the Expence of your whole Life's Peace, resolve to bless the Man, who has it not in his Power to return one Grain of Joy, for that exhaustless Store he must for ever find in the Possession of your Charms? Can you be so severely just to Duty, yet so relentless to the Calls of Love?— How small was the Request I made, and that too not for my own, but your infinitely to me more valuable sake, that you would for a Time, a little Time, suspend the cruel Bliss designed him? — But you think it a Virtue to grant him all, while you refuse me every thing! — I will not, however, desist from my Sollicitations, and though I have but little Encouragement to hope you will allow me that Liberty, intreat you will permit my Tongue to attempt that which my Pen has been unable to perform.— I beg you will allow me once to throw myself beneath your Feet, and if all I can then urge is ineffectual to move your Soul, will never ask it more.— Yes, most adorable Anadea! I will then take my everlasting Farewell of those Eyes, those amiable Eyes, whose sweet Enchantments, in a Moment do the Work of Ages, and shed an Influence never, never to be erased.— If my Presence will be an Offence to him whom you are so willing to oblige, my Visit shall be private, or if you please, will attend you at the House of that Lady, where I had the Glory (for so I still will

226 *The Fatal SECRET: Or,*

call it) of becoming your Slave, and receiving those Wounds, which soon you'll find too fatal not to merit your Compassion. — If I am not hated by you, — if the Presumption of my Love declar'd be not a Crime beyond Forgiveness, deny not this last Request to him, whom your Cruelty will shortly render unable to make more: — Though, if there be Remembrance in the Grave, your Prosperity and Happiness shall be the endless Wish of

The Undone

BLESSURE.

WHAT now became of the enamour'd *Anadea*? How was it possible for a Heart so prepossessed as hers, to hold out in a Reserve which was very near breaking the Strings which held it. — Through Fire, through all the Dangers that Imagination can invent, would she have flown, once more to have seen the ador'd Object of her Affections: How then could she deny herself that Happiness, when pressed to it by him with such Tendernefs? Yet still the Consequences that might attend this Meeting, for a Time repelled the Dictates of her Passion. — But it was no more than a faint Struggle; Love! all-conquering, all-o'er-powering Love! triumphed over every other Consideration! and she consented to his and her own impatient Wishes, in these Words:

To Count BLESSURE.

My Lord,

THE Concern you are pleas'd still to express for my Peace of Mind, is too obliging not to command my utmost Esteem: I cannot, without being guilty of ill Manners to you, and Unkindness to myself, refuse the Honour you would do me of a Visit; but because it may raise a Suspicion, which I would avoid, choose rather to wait your coming at that Lady's you mention. A
Con-

Conversation such as yours is too improving, too agreeable, not to be accepted with the highest Satisfaction; and you extremely wrong me, if you think I look on it as any other than the Effect of my ill Fortune, that I have it not in my Power to give you greater Proofs of Friendship than the Grant of this Request; which tho' it may seem of little Consequence, might be dangerous, if the Justice of my Reasons were not sufficient to bear down the Sophistry of all those you are prepar'd to give me, in Prejudice of that Duty I have sworn to maintain while I am,

ANADEA.

P. S. I will be this Evening about Five at the appointed Place.

THE Count, as he had good Cause, now thought he had gained his Point: He examined all her Letters again and again, and found not one Word in any of them which seemed to express a Dislike of him, and in this last very much the contrary; and though he was free from Vanity, could not forbear indulging himself with the Reflection, that it must be more than an ordinary Esteem and bare Civility which could influence a Woman of *Anadea's* reserved Temper to act in the Manner she did: And beginning to hope her Heart was of his Party, did not much doubt but he should find Arguments to confute all those that Duty could raise in Opposition to his Wishes.

FULL of Impatience, and some Mixture of Fears and Doubts, which yet were infinitely greater on her Side than his, did both wait the expected Hour; which being arrived, they happened to go so exactly at the Hour, that they met each other at the Door. Madamoiselle *De Flores* (for so was that Lady call'd) happened to be abroad, the Count, unwilling to lose the Opportunity, took the Liberty of entreating her to walk into the *Tuilleries* with him; which, she having gone this Length, made no Scruple of obliging him

him in. The Count in secret bless'd his good Stars, which had favour'd him with an Advantage he could not have hop'd for in that Lady's House; for she being of a Coquette Humour, and beside, not in the least appris'd of the Reasons of their coming, would have given him very little time to entertain his ador'd *Anadea* in the Manner he desir'd; nor was she, whose Guesſes were the same with his, much less satisfy'd with the Accident. It not being the time of the Day in which Company usually walk, made the Place they were in extremely retir'd, and they had the good Fortune of meeting no Interruption.— I believe it would be but needless to inform the Reader what kind of Conversation it was with which these two amiable Persons entertain'd each other: By what has been already said of the Violence of that Passion which influenc'd both their Souls, 'tis easy to imagine nothing was omitted on his Side that Love could inspire, or Eloquence find Words for; and that she having made this Condescension not out of a womanish Pride, or Fondness of hearing fine things said to her, but purely oblig'd to it by the Force of an Inclination too powerful to be resisted, could not now restrain those soft Emotions which had brought her thither with so much Artifice, but that he discover'd enough to make him happy.— That Passion is but weak which stands in need of the Language of the Tongue to make itself believ'd:— A thousand Ways it speaks; each Look, each little Motion will betray it:— In vain we wear the Mask of cold Indifference;— in vain effect Reserve and formal Distance: The intestine Flame breaks out the more, the more we would conceal it; bursts out in Sighs, and blazes in our Glances. — In spite of *Anadea's* Efforts to the contrary, the lovely Count read in her sparkling Eyes the long'd-for Secret, perceived the soft Desire glow on her blushing Cheeks, and tremble in her faltering Accents.— Wrapp'd in a Joy too violent for Constraint, it was not in his Power to hide the mighty Transport: — He flew upon her, caught her

her in his Arms, and half smothering her with eager Kisses, which he ravish'd from her Lip and Breast, soon let her know her cautions had been fruitless; that he was conscious of the Blessing he possess'd, and triumph'd over the *Chevalier* in the noblest Part of her, her Soul. But with what Words is there a Possibility of representing the Shame, the Confusion of *Anadea*, at a Behaviour so different from what she expected, and so much alter'd from that humble Awe with which he had at first approach'd her; but assuming, as much as she could, an Air of Resentment, she reproach'd the unlicens'd Liberty he had taken, in Terms as severe as her Heart would give her leave to do; but though not altogether so harsh as would have proceeded from a Person to whom he was indifferent, yet they were such as would have very much confounded him, if all the Time she was speaking them, the same tender Symptoms already mention'd, had not assur'd him the Offence he had been guilty of was not too great to be forgiven. — He entreated her Pardon, however, in Expressions as full of Humility as the most haughty of her Sex could wish, and reiterated numberless Protestations, that encourag'd Hope should never transport him to transgress the Rules of Honour; and happening to say that he would not, even in a Wish, violate that Respect which was his Duty to pay her, she instantly catch'd at that Word, and interrupting him; No more (said she) shall all the Perfections you are Master of oblige me to neglect that which I ought to pay to him that gave me Being: — And whatever I may suffer by it, will find some Pretence to hasten the Performance of my Promise to the *Chevalier*, lest hereafter it should not be in my Power to do it. — She utter'd this with so much seeming Courage, that the Extasy with which the *Count* had so lately been taken up, was not a little abated: — But, alas! what are the Resolutions of a Lover? The smallest Gale of tender Sighs from the beloved Object puffs them away, they mix with Air, and are no more remember'd. —

They parted not till he had prevail'd on her not only to recede from that cruel Determination of hast'ning the intended Marriage, but also, instead of that, to do her utmost Endeavours to delay it, and in the mean Time, continue a Correspondence with him by Letters, or otherways, according as Opportunity, and his Invention to find some Stratagem to procure him that Happiness, should permit her to allow it.

WHEN once a Mind truly fir'd by *Love* is in pursuit of the Gratification of its Wishes, no Reflections have the Force to put a stop to the Career, to damp the Joy of Hope, or quell the Anxieties of Doubt. The *Count*, transported with the Progress he had made on the Affections of *Anadea*, thought of nothing but how he should increase the Tenderneſs he found ſhe had for him, and raiſe it to a Pitch unable to deny him any thing: Nor had he any Reason to deſpair that, having obtained ſo far of her as to ſuſpend the Marriage with his Rival, he ſhould in a little Time prevail on her to put him in his Place, and gave himſelf up wholly to Joy. In what Manner the *Marquis* his Father would receive her as a Daughter, or how he would look on himſelf for having made a Choice ſo far beneath what he deſigned for him, and without his Knowledge or Conſent; all this never came into his Thoughts, or if it did, it vaniſhed like a Vapour: Bleſs'd in his *Love*, he ſeem'd but little to regard the reſt, and left the Event to Fortune to determine.

BUT it was not in this Manner the poor *Anadea* made herſelf Reparation for the Inquietudes ſhe had ſuſtain'd: She was now fill'd with more and greater than before; not that her Paſſion would not have enabled her to endure as much as his could do, and left her as little the Power of Conſideration for herſelf. — Diſobedience to her Father, and Breach of the Promiſe ſhe had made to the *Chevalier*, were Crimes which grew leſs and leſs formidable: She could have been contented to have ſuffer'd any Reproach, any Shame, any Punishment for *Bleſſure*; but the Apprehenſions

ensions of making him unfortunate, was the severest Dagger to her Soul. — She foresaw a Train of Ills, the Consequences of being his Wife; yet, by what she believed of *his* Passion, and was certain of her *own*, thought to become so, was unavoidable, without an imminent Hazard of Death or Distraction to them both. — Thus did she afflict herself; and the inward Agonies of her Mind immediately wrought such an Alteration in her Looks, that feigning herself sick (which was the only Pretence she could find out for delaying the Marriage with *De Semar*) none suspected it for any other than real.

It is hard to say whether her Father or the *Chevalier* was most concerned for her imagined Indisposition; both loved her with an equal Tendernefs, though in a different Manner; and she receiv'd so many Instances in that Time of this young Gentleman's good Nature and Affection, that it very much added to her other Perturbations, that she was forc'd by a more prevailing Passion to deceive him.

A PHYSICIAN was sent for to attend the fair Patient; but the *Count* being apprised of his Name by *Anadea*, for that Purpose, by a private Billet, he made him a Visit, and a Present too considerable, not to make the Person who received it wholly devoted to his Interest. — After feeling her Pulse, and the usual Formalities on those Occasions, he told the old Gentleman and intended Bridegroom, who were impatiently waiting his Opinion, that the Lady was at present extremely ill; and that he fear'd all he could prescribe for her Recovery would be of little Service without Change of Air. — It was therefore wholly necessary for her Recovery, that she should be removed, and advised to have her carry'd toward *Versailles*, which he told them was a most excellent Situation, and with the Recipe's he should apply, he hoped to work a perfect Cure of the Malady she at present labour'd under.

THE Doctor having done his Part, *Anadea* failed not in hers, and reminded her Father, that she had an

intimate Friend who had a Country Seat near *Versailles*; that she was certain not only of a Welcome there, but also of being taken greater Care of than she could expect from a Stranger. — The indulgent Parent heard the Proposal with Satisfaction, and every thing was ordered to be got ready for her Removal with all Expedition. She was carried in a Litter for Ease, and the assiduous *Chevalier* attended her on Horseback to the Place she was to go; which being so small a Distance from *Paris*, made him the more consoled at leaving her; because he could with Ease make her a Visit every Day. Unhappy Gentleman! he little thought how little welcome he was grown, and that he had left her in a Place where the Person who had supplanted him, would have the Opportunity of being with her every Hour.

IT was to the House of Mademoiselle *De Flores*, that the counterfeit Indispos'd was carry'd; and the *Count*, who had put this Stratagem into *Anadea's* Head, was lodged next Door. Had he thought fit to have entrusted that Lady with the Affair, or his going into that Part of the Country, she would doubtless have made him an Offer of being under the same Roof with his Mistress; but he considered her as a Woman not to be depended on in a Case such as this, and she knew no more than what was publickly believ'd, that *Anadea* being really very ill, was advis'd to that Place, for the Benefit of the Air; and not being of a Temper to love Retirement, made an Excuse (which was received better than she imagin'd) that having some great Business in Town, it was impossible for her to be at *Versailles* herself. The Lovers by this Means had all the Opportunity imaginable of entertaining one another. The *Count* was scarce ever from her, and pretending to the Servants of Mademoiselle *De Flores*, that he was a Person who the Physicians had appointed to attend her, was not at all suspected for any other than what he seem'd. Thus it went on for several Days; but the impatient *Blessure* putting her in mind that it would be impossible

impossible to carry on the Deceit much longer; and that then she would be forced to the Arms of the *Chevalier*, at last won her to consent to end his Fears, by yielding to be his Wife.— This Grant obtained, he easily found Means to get a Priest into the House, who for a Fee, like that he gave the Physician, tied the indissoluble Knot, and with as little Difficulty concealed himself in her Chamber, and when all the Family were hush'd, and there remained no Danger of Interruption, consummated that Felicity he so ardently had languish'd for.— She was now his own; and she who was hardly brought to make a Breach in her Duty to a Parent, would not be guilty of a Sin against it to her Husband: He demanded the full Possession of her Charms the next Night, and the next after that, and so on; and she was too obedient to refuse, in spite of the-Risque of a Discovery, which by such repeated Ventures might possibly fall out, to the Destruction of that Scheme they had laid and agreed to follow, never to reveal their Marriage till the Death of the Marquis *De Blessure*. The *Bride*, however, was not without her Fears, and in midst of all those Raptures which attend reciprocal Affection, rais'd to be the most elevated Height that human Nature can sustain, she would on a sudden start, and imagine she heard somebody in the Room, or listening at the Door.— Nor did her Apprehensions deceive her: An old Maid, who was a sort of a Governante over the rest of the Servants, happening to sit up later than ordinary, fancy'd she heard something like the Murmures of a Voice in *Anadea's* Chamber, which unfortunately was directly under that in which she was: She had before some little Suspicion of the too constant Attendance which the *Count* paid his suppos'd *Patient*, and easily perceiving that of whatever sort her Distemper was, it was not dangerous enough to require a Physician always present, was resolved to be satisfy'd of the Truth.— She stole softly down Stairs, and was perfectly convinc'd there was somebody in the Room beside

beside *Anadea*, because she heard two Voices, tho' she could not distinguish what they said. — She kept close Watch, however, went not to Bed all Night, and early in the Morning saw him go out at a little back Gate which opened into the Fields, and shut it softly after him, as was his Custom, before any of the Family were stirring. — This Creature, who had a greater Share of *Honesty* than *Good Nature*, and was more *scrupulous* than *wise*, thought Concealment of an Affair, such as she fancied this was, a Sin, and immediately writ her Lady an Account of all she had discovered. — Mademoiselle *De Flores*, though she was no Enemy to Intrigue, could not forgive it in a Person who made not choice of her for a Confidante, and failed not to whisper it in all Company she came into! The Report spread so far (as Scandal is always industrious) that it came to the Ears of some of the *Chevalier's* nearest Friends and Relations, who being not very well pleas'd at his marrying without a Fortune, were glad of this Occasion to express their Dislike. — They acquainted him with what had been told them, with all the aggravating Circumstances imaginable: But his good Opinion of *Anadea's* Virtue was too deeply rooted for this Aspersions to remove: — He was so far from giving Credit to it, that he protested, whoever endeavoured to impose on his Belief in that Manner he would look on as his mortal Enemy, and avoid as he would Hell. — It had, perhaps, rested here, if one of the Persons who were his Informers had not added, that he had it from the Mouth of Mademoiselle *De Flores*, to whose House his imaginary virtuous Lady had retired, under pretence of Sicknes, but in reality to meet her Gallant with greater Privacy. — This so nettled him, that he went that Moment to wait on that Lady; not that he yet believ'd the Accusation, or that she had reported it, but to oblige her to confute a Falshood, of which she was said to be the Author. — But with what Words can I set forth the Confusion of this surpris'd astonish'd Lover, when he heard her frankly own all he had been

been told, for Truth, and was by her shewed the Letter which her Maid had writ? — He stamp'd about the Room, tore his Hair, rav'd like one distracted, knew not what to think, — nor how to proceed to find the fatal Certainty of what he now began to fear. — At last (for what is so ingenious as Female Malice in Invention!) she told him she would put him in a Way to prove the Dishonour of her whom he esteemed so virtuous. — I dare so much rely (*said she*) on the Integrity of my Servant, that I will write a Letter to her, of which, if you think fit, you shall yourself, in some Disguise, be Bearer: She shall conceal you in the House, till you have an Opportunity of making your own Eyes the Witnesses of what she has alledged. The *Chevalier* extremely approv'd of this Advice, but as to the Disguise, told her it need-ed not; for it being customary for him to go thither every Day, it was but his tarrying there, after he had taken Leave, and watching the Approach of this happy Favourite. — That is true, indeed, replied the Lady, I had forgot. — But I would caution you not to take the least Notice of this to the old Gentleman, who, though a perfect honest Man, may do much to save a Daughter's Character. — He will certainly send to apprise her of it, and make her on her Guard. — To convince you that I will not (*resum'd the Chevalier*) leave your House till I take Horse for *Versailles*: If you please, therefore, to prepare my Credentials to your Mind, my Servant in the mean Time shall get my Horses ready. — Every thing being thus agreed on, she immediately went to her Closet, and writ these Lines, which she read to him before she seal'd it.

TO FLAVILLA.

IT lies on you to prove the Truth of what you writ concerning Anadea. — This Gentleman is dubious of it. — Conceal him in the House, unknown to any of
the

the Family, till you find an Opportunity of convincing him by Ocular Demonstration.—— Neglect it not, if you would escape the Punishment due to Traducers, or preserve a Friend of your Mistress.

DE FLORES.

THIS was writ in a Manner so assur'd and certain, that he almost doubted whether he need seek a farther Confirmation; but the Charms of *Anadea* raising in his Soul a Flood of Tendernefs, told him he ought to have the utmost Proof e'er he believ'd her guilty; and away he went towards *Versailles*, with Agitations which never had accompany'd him before: But when he arriv'd there, and came into the Presence of *Anadea*, how hard was it for him to retain those Suspicions Madamoiselle *De Flores* had inspir'd him with; but resolving on the promis'd Proof, he made a short Visit, and shewing the Letter to the Servant, and examining her on the Occasion, grew more fearful than before, that he should find all he had been told too just. The informing Servant, as it behov'd her, was now doubly diligent in her Watch; she saw the Person enter, and took Care the Family should go to Bed betimes, that he might venture to stay with the more Security:— And every thing being order'd proper for the Design, it had the Effect she both expected and wish'd;— and in the dead of the Night, when the endearing Pair thought themselves most happy, most secure, they were on a sudden surpris'd with Shrieks, and a great Cry of Thieves. The watchful Spy began it, and in a Moment the frighted Servants took the Alarm, started from their Beds, and echo'd round the House the Noise:— Here (said she, running towards the Chamber of *Anadea*) here the Villains broke in:—Where, where? cry'd one.—How many are they? bawl'd out another:— Ring the Bell, said a Third:— Who shall venture to the Turret? rejoind'd a different Voice:— All was in an Uproar, every one in Confusion.—The Count, equally distracted between the Care of preserving *Anadea's* Person, and her

her Honour, knew not what was best to do in this Extremity; but jumping out of the Bed on the first Beginning of the Noise, made a shift to get some Part of his Cloaths on, before, under pretence of searching for the Ruffians, they burst the Door open.— The Lights which some of them had in their Hands, gave to the amaz'd *Chevalier* not only a Confirmation of his Misfortune, but the Knowledge of his *Rival*: He had frequently seen *Blessure*; and though the Habit he was then in was plain, and far different from what he wore when he appear'd himself, yet the Features of his Face could not be disguis'd from him whoever had been Witness of their uncommon Beauty. — But in this Discovery he had the Advantage of him; for the *Count* thinking no other than that there were really Thieves in the House, cry'd out to them to be gone, and not fright the Lady; if there were Ruffians, he would join with them in the Search. — None but what is in this Room (interrupted fiercely the *Chevalier*) You are the Villain we pursue; and hadst thou ten thousand Lives, they all should perish in Expiation of that Lady's Honour.— He had not finish'd those Words, when *Anadea* giving a great Shriek, cry'd out, Ah, we are betray'd! Guard, — guard your Life, my Lord! — How! Is it so (resum'd *Blessure*) Thus, then, I retort the Villain back to him that gave it.— There was no farther Room for Speech; the Fury with which both were possess'd, left neither of them the Power of making that Use of their Weapons which is taught in Schools, and running at each other with equal Violence, both of them receiv'd Wounds, which either of them would have had Skill to parry, had the Cause for which they fought been of less Consequence. But that which the *Count* gave to the *Chevalier*, took away all Occasion for a second; the unhappy Gentleman instantly fell dead on the Place.—And all this was over in so short a Time, that the Servants, confounded, and unable to guess the Meaning of what they saw, had not the Means of preventing it, though they had of securing the *Count*, by the Orders of that directing Wench.

Wench, whose Officiousness had been the Cause of this Scene of Woe.

WHAT was now the Horror, the Distraction of *Anadea*! scarce could they, who had compassionate Souls enough to endeavour it, keep Life in her. — She saw the Man, who by her Father's Command, and her own solemn Promise, ought to have been her Husband, lie dead before her; — kill'd by him whom her inconsiderate Passion had led her to marry, in spite of Duty or Pre-engagement. — But that, though terrible, was not the greatest and most shocking Part of her Calamity: — Her dear *Blessure*, her ador'd, adoring Bridegroom, was torn from her; she knew not well whither, or if not near the same Condition to which he had reduc'd his Rival. — She saw him hurt, — she beheld his precious Blood spilt for her sake, and was deny'd the Privilege of binding up his Wounds, — of seeing him, or consulting what was best to be done for their common Interest or Safety. — But when Morning came, she was eas'd of some Part of the Dilemma she was in; one of the Servants told her that Horses being got ready, she must prepare to attend to *Paris* the Body of the *Chevalier*, with that Gentleman (for as yet they knew not who the *Count* was) who had so cruelly murder'd him, there to give an Account of their Actions, and by what Means this Misfortune was brought about. — To hear that her dear Lord was not so dangerously wounded as her Fears for him had suggested, gave an inexpressible Alleviation to the Torments she had endur'd; and though there were yet many remaining Reasons of Disquiet, she supported them with a Fortitude, which till then she knew not herself she was Mistress of. — What most try'd her Patience was, that during the Time of their little Journey, she could not be admitted to speak to the *Count*, who being bound and pinion'd, was put into the Litter with the dead Body of the *Chevalier*; and she mounted behind one of the Servants, was oblig'd to ride, encompass'd by a Crowd of People, who seem'd

a Guard

a Guard about her, at a good Distance from the Treasure of her Soul.

At their Arrival in *Paris*, the *Count* was immediately known; and the Discovery of his Quality made those to whose Custody he was deliver'd, oblig'd to use him with more Civility than those Rusticks had done, who before had the Charge of him. However, the Fact being plainly proved upon him by a great Number of Witnesses, he was, by the Magistrates apply'd to for that Purpose, committed to close Confinement.— *Anadea*, though carry'd to no other Place than her Father's House, was not more at Liberty; all was now discover'd; her Dislike of the *Chevalier*, her pretended Indisposition to avoid marrying him, her Passion for the *Count*, every Particular of the Transaction by this Accident laid open.— Nothing was a Secret, but that she was his Wife; and that, no Reproaches, no Shame, no Terrors, could draw from her; not doubting, but if that were known, it would incense the *Marquis* and others of his Relations so far against him, that they would take but little Care to defend him from the Prosecutions the Friends of the *Chevalier* would make against him.

BLESSURE, in the mean time, was not idle in his Imprisonment; having obtain'd his dear *Anadea*, he thought Life, and the Possession of her, a Blessing too great to part with, if by any Means to be preserv'd.— He neglected nothing therefore that might be of Service to him; and the extraordinary Qualifications he was Master of, join'd to the sweetest and most affable Disposition in the World, had rais'd him so many Friends, that, with the Interest his Father had with the King, gave him great Hopes of a Pardon.— The old *Marquis*, as 'tis not to be thought otherwise, came from his *Villa* immediately to *Paris*, on the first News of this Misfortune, and left no Means untry'd to save his only and beloved Son; but all his Sollicitations proms'd him but little Success, and he was ready to fall into Despair, when he was sent for by Madam *De la Roche*. This Lady was at that time one of the King's most favourite.

favourite Mistresses : She had a Daughter, on whose Heart the Charms of young *Blessure* had made the most sensible Impression ; which being discover'd by her Mother, who tenderly lov'd her, she doubted not but the *Marquis* would think a Pardon for his Son a sufficient Dower, if there had been no other Motives to induce his Consent to the Match ; but withal, she was not only a great Fortune, but also a celebrated Beauty. It was with an inexpressible Joy the old *Marquis* listen'd to the Proposal ; and promised for his Son every thing they desir'd. In fine, all being agreed on, Madam *De la Roche* went immediately to the King, threw herself at his Feet, and intreated this Proof of his Affection with so much Zeal and Tendernefs, that she succeeded ; and before the *Marquis*, who had staid some Time to entertain his design'd Daughter-in Law, had left her House, return'd with the so-much-despair'd-of Pardon in her Hand.— The Transport of a Father for the Life of an only Child, may better be imagin'd than exprefs'd ; and after making those Retributions to the Lady with such an Obligation demanded, it was concluded among them, that they should go all together to the *Bastile*, and overjoy him with the News of Life, and Liberty restor'd, who by this Time began to think of nothing less.— The Sight of these two Ladies, one of whose Sentiments he was not unacquainted with, gave him some little Suspicion of the Truth ; and he receiv'd the Congratulations they made him on his Pardon with a Coldness which surpris'd every body, because he doubted not but there was a Price requir'd for it, which he was utterly unable to pay.— It was not long before he was confirm'd in this Conjecture, his Father taking young Madam *De la Roche* by the Hand, and presenting her to him, it is not (*said he*) for your Life alone that you are indebted to this Lady, but for a much greater Blessing, her Love : Through all the Disadvantages of that Character your criminal Acquaintance with *Anadea* has drawn on you, she finds something in you to approve :— 'Tis your Part therefore to endeavour to deserve.

serve her Goodness, and by your future Behaviour expiate the past. — Though from the first Moment of their Appearance, the *Count* had expected a Salutation of this Nature, the Mention of *Anadea* with Dishonour, gave him a Shock he was not arm'd against. — He reddened extremely, and with a Voice which express'd the utmost Discontent, — If, my Lord (*reply'd he*) you would have me think the Tidings you bring essential to my Happiness, you will not name that Lady in an Affair, which, if truly reported, would not be to the Disadvantage of her Fame. — How! (*interrupted the Marquis, fiercely*) not to the Disadvantage of her Fame? Were there not a Train of Evidences to prove her Fault? — Did not all the Family of *Madamoiselle De Flores* depose the shameful Truth? — Is not the whole World appris'd of it? — If it were so (*resumed the Count, with equal Warmth*) if all they have sworn were just, the Blame ought to be mine; — but People often judge by Appearances; — This Affair may not be what it seems. —

THE Dispute had rose much higher than it did, if *Madam De la Roche* had not moderated the *Marquis's* growing Indignation, by telling him, he ought not to take ill the Concern his Son express'd, since it was rather a Proof of Honour to vindicate that of a Lady who lov'd him, than the contrary; and that if he would oblige her, he should mention it no more. — You see (*resumed he*) the Obligations you have to the Goodness of this Lady; and I hope you will give a Proof of that Honour you seem to stand so much upon, by studying to be grateful. — I am indeed (*answer'd the Count, gloomily*) indebted past Power of returning, but shall endeavour it. — You must (*interrupted his Father*) In what I can, I will, my Lord, (*rejoined the other*) With these Words, the *Marquis* taking *Madam De la Roche* by the Hand, obliged the *Count* to do the same by the Daughter, and they all went into the Coach, the *Marquis* having discharg'd the necessary Fees for the Prisoner's leaving the *Bastile* as he came up.

IT was to the House of Madam *De la Roche* that the Coach was order'd to drive; where he was soon made acquainted with the History of the Misfortune he fear'd.— The *Marquis*, after relating at full the Obligations he had to that Lady, told him what he had promis'd in his Name, and that he must resolve in a very few Days to make her his Wife.— The Perplexity the *Count* was in, in what Manner he should reply, depriv'd him, for some Moments, of the Power of doing it; which Hesitation inflamed the arbitrary Nature of the passionate *Marquis*: And is the Command I give you (said he) such as can possibly occasion a Demur, whether you should obey, or not? — If not all this Lady's Charms have Force to influence you, to accept her as the choicest Gift of Heaven; if all she has done for you is not enough to excite your Gratitude, you are not now to be told, that my *Will* is of itself sufficient to force you to Compliance. — Not to an Impossibility, as this perhaps may be (replied the *Count* :) But, however (continued he, bowing with all Humility) nothing can make me so truly miserable, as being constrain'd to appear guilty of a Failure in that Duty I owe your Lordship, or Ingratitude to Persons I am so highly obliged to, as I am to these Ladies.— I beg, therefore, a short Time for Consideration.— This Evening I will attend you at your Lodgings, and endeavour to prove myself obedient. With these Words he went out of the Room. But as the *Marquis* was rising from his Chair, more enraged than before, with an Intention to stop him, Madam *De la Roche*, tho' but little satisfied with his Behaviour in reality, seem'd to excuse it, and told him, that she did not in the least question, but when he reflected on the Advantages there were in a Marriage with her Daughter, he would readily enough assent to the Proposal; and entreated he would be calm, at least, till he heard his Answer.— The young Lady could not so well conceal her Resentment; her Blushes, and the Sighs which issued from her Breast, in spite of her Efforts to the contrary, disclos'd

clos'd it plain.— All this little Company had their Share of Disquiets, and utterly unable to say any thing which might be of Comfort to each other, broke up much sooner than they design'd.— The Ladies remain'd at Home to indulge their several Discontents, and the *Marquis* retir'd to his Lodgings to wait the coming of his Son.— But that young Gentleman had a Distress of Soul which his Father, unknowing of his Reasons, and also of a Nature not very tender, was far from conceiving.— The Moment he left the House of Madam *De la Roche*, he went to *Anadea*, whom he had never seen since the fatal Night of his being surpris'd with her in the Manner already represented, and whom he now found in a Confusion, and Depth of Sorrow, which heighten'd his own.— The Reader will easily believe, this unhappy Lady had endur'd all that can be imagin'd of Soul-rending Reproaches, which a Father could utter in the Distraction of Thought for the imagin'd Dishonour of a belov'd Child: But all she suffer'd from her Shame, and from what she knew he felt, could not prevail on her to reveal what she believ'd might be prejudicial to her dear *Blessure*.— In fine, the Sense of these Misfortunes struck so deep an Impression on the Mind of this Gentleman, who valued the Honour of his Family above his Life, that in a few Days he broke his Heart: But not even to see him in the Agonies of Death could prevail on her to disclose the Secret, and he left the World with an Opinion of her Guilt.— It was not an Hour after he was no more, that she was told Count *Blessure* was come to visit her. The Surprise, the Extasy of Joy which seiz'd her Spirits at hearing he was at Liberty, immediately succeeding as excessive a one of Grief, was very near throwing her into the same Condition with her Father: She swoon'd at Sight of him, and when she recover'd, had not for some Time the Power of Speech: But what her Tongue denied, her Arms made Reparation for.— She fell on his Neck, and grasp'd him with convulsive Strainings, which made him fear their Violence would be fatal.

W H E N

WHEN the first Emotions of their mutual Transports would admit of cooler Conversations, he recounted to her all that had passed since the Time of their Separation: But when he came to that Part which made mention of *Madam De la Roche*, she discover'd so visible a Disorder, that he was obliged to give over the Discourse, and reassure her with ten thousand Endearments, and Vows of an eternal Fidelity, before he could restore the faded Colour to her Cheeks. After a long Consultation what was best to be done, it was at last agreed, still to preserve the Secret of their Marriage, and that he should lay the Blame of his refusing the Proposal made by *Madam De la Roche* on want of Inclination, rather than a Pre-engagement.—The one, he thought, might gain him Time; but a Confession of the other seem'd to promise nothing but immediate Ruin.—He knew his Father's avaricious Disposition too well, to imagine he would ever consent to his espousing any Woman who had not a Fortune equal to his own; much less would he forgive the bringing *Anadea* into his, whom he hated, not only for her narrow Circumstances, but also for an old Grudge between their Families. All this, though with an infinite Regret, did the tender Husband represent to his afflicted Wife, who, in spite of the Shocks it gave her Modesty, and conscious Virtue, to be look'd on as a Mistress, consented with a seeming Chearfulness; since to clear her Reputation must be the undoing of him, who was infinitely dearer to her than all other Considerations. But to make herself a little more at Ease than she had been, while amidst the daily Reproaches of those who pretended to be her Friends, and the Taunts and little Jest of Creatures, who pretended to value themselves on their undiscover'd Vices, she propos'd to retire: She told the *Count* that she would leave *Paris*, and changing her Name, make choice of some Place for her Abode where she was wholly a Stranger, till the Death of the relentless *Marquis*, or some other Accident, should happen, which should render it not a Misfortune to
 acknow-

acknowledge her his Wife. She remember'd, that in her Journey to *Versailles*, she had gone through a very pleasant, but solitary Place, called *St. Clou*, and being unknown to every body there, told him, she thought she could not make a fitter Choice. He was extremely pleased with the Design; and to strengthen her in it, added, that being unknown, he might visit her more frequently, and with greater Liberty, than he could hope to do in *Paris*, where there were so many busy Tongues who would be continually reporting every thing to his Father. The Affair being thus settled, he took leave with less Dissatisfaction than he would have done, and when to the *Marquis* with more haste than he would have done, could he have guess'd at the Resolutions form'd against his Happiness.— He had no sooner enter'd the Room, where his Father with the utmost Impatience expected him, than he began to question him in this Manner:— I will not ask you (*said he*) whether you are now come determined in Obedience, or not:— I hope you are enough acquainted with your Duty to have no other Sentiments than those of Remorse for but a seeming Neglect of it:— But I would know, and I command you to inform me, what Reasons made you, not with the Pleasure I expected, receive the Condescensions of *Madam De la Roche*. The *Count*, who had summoned all his Courage for this Interview, readily replied; I am infinitely more amazed, my Lord, that you should feign Ignorance of what appear'd so plain, than you can be at my Behaviour:— My Reasons were not indeed so proper for my Tongue to reveal, at least, before that Lady; but I am certain that my Eyes have not sufficiently the Power of Dissimulation, not to inform her my Dislike of her made me guilty, and will still keep me so, of Disobedience to your Will.— How! will keep you so?— (*cry'd the incens'd Marquis*) ——— Pardon my Lord (*resum'd he, throwing himself on his Knees*) pardon your offending Son, who owns his Crime, but has not the Means of Reparation. — 'Tis irresistible over-

ruling Fate that contradicts your Will, and fixes in my Nature an Aversion so strong, as even your Commands, tho' even sacred to me, have not the Power to shake. — 'Tis false (*replied the other, more enraged*) 'tis false: This counterfeit Humility may cheat a Girl; but used to me, gives double Provocation: — 'Tis not your Aversion for Madam *De la Roche*, but Love for *Anadea*, emboldens you thus to dare my Fury: — That Sorceress has bewitch'd you from your Duty, your Interest; but will her prostituted Charms repair your Loss of me? — Has she the Power to turn my Curses into Blessings? For Curses numberless, and only Curses shall be your Portion if — He was proceeding, when the *Count*, to whom these Words were worse than Death, catching fast hold of his Knees, conjur'd his Pity and Forgiveness in Terms so tender, that had the Father been influenced by any part of that good Nature his Son was so prodigiously stor'd with, he must have been moved by it: But fiery, obstinate, and cruel in his Disposition, he was so far from seeming touch'd, that finding there was no Hope of compassing his Intentions either by Force or Persuasion, never was Fury more tempestuous than his: He branded *Anadea* with all the Names of Infamy that Malice can invent; and on his Son wished all the Plagues of Heaven and Earth. But young *Blessure*, fixed in Constancy, and steady Faith, endured unmoved, tho' shocked, the dreadful Storm; and believing his Presence would be far from allaying it, begg'd leave to retire. No (*said the Marquis*) you shall find you are a Prisoner still; and with these Words, giving a great Stamp with his Foot, in rushed five or six Fellows, entire Strangers to young *Blessure*, and who by their Looks, in any other Place than his Father's Lodgings, he would rather have taken for Assassines, than to be of any other Profession: But the *Marquis* leaving him no room for Conjecture, with a Look which sufficiently denoted the implacable Indignation of his Soul, cry'd out; It is to these Persons I shall now resign the Authority I ought to have over you; and since you are
 weary

weary of a Father's Power, will try how you can brook Obedience to that of others.—Go (*continued he, if possible, more sternly than before*) bear him to Banishment, and let me see his Face no more, till Time and Penitence have wash'd away the Remembrance of his Crime.— This was all he said; and going hastily into his Closet, shut the Door after him, and would listen to nothing the *Count* was about to offer; who altogether unable to guess what was design'd for him, thought it no way blameable, when thus treated, to make Resistance; and did it with such Fury, that he wounded two or three of these Fellows, before they could disarm him: But his Father's Servants coming in to their Assistance, at last he was over-powered, and forced into a Coach; which being guarded on each side, made it impossible for him to escape.— They made the best of their Way to the next Sea-port Town, whence, with the first fair Wind, they were to embark for what Place soever the Ship was bound, the *Marquis* having no other Design than to separate him from *Anadea*, not doubting but that Time and Absence would make an Alteration in his Humour.

THAT afflicted Lady, in the mean Time, was preparing to leave *Paris*; and having heard of a Place, the agreeable Solitude of which seemed to suit her present Circumstances, was impatient to be gone: She waited for nothing but a Visit from *Blessure*, that she might inform him where she was going; but neither seeing nor hearing from him as she expected, she sent to his Lodgings, and at the Return of her Messenger, was inform'd of such News as was very near depriving her of her Senses: All his Retinue being removed, the People of the House said he was gone to travel, to what Place they knew not; but that some of the *Marquis's* Servants, who came for his Baggage, had told them, That not being perfectly well pleas'd with a March his Father had propos'd, and somewhat discontented at the Death of the *Chevalier De Semar*, killed by his Hand in a dishonourable

Cause, he resolv'd in foreign Climes to endeavour to obliterate the Memory of what had been so prejudicial to his Fame and Peace of Mind at home. This was, indeed, the publick Rumour; and among all who heard it, there was not one who imagin'd his Departure had any other Motive than what was reported. *Anadea* doubted not of the Truth, and fell into so violent a Despair, that it is to be wonder'd at, that she sought not forcibly to rid herself of a Life which promised her nothing but Misery: But she was reserv'd to know Misfortunes of a deeper Dye, than even her wild Fancy, black as it was, could represent; and not all the Horror she endur'd in a Belief that her dear *Blessure* was the falsest, basest, and most ungrateful of Mankind, not the fierce Convulsions, not the Distraction which that Belief created in her, had the Power to drive the tortur'd Soul from its Habitation. — Now more than ever detesting all Society, and unable longer to endure a Place where she so much had suffer'd, so much had been betray'd, she pursued her Intentions of retiring to *St. Clow*.

THE House she made choice of for her Abode, was about half a Mile distant from any other, and at least a Furlong from the *Village*. It seem'd a Place cut out and fashion'd for Despair: The Situation of it was in a Vale, about a Bow-shot from the great Road, and encompass'd with Trees of so vast a Height and Thickness, that a Passenger could not, without being appris'd of it, know there was any such thing as a Habitation there. Behind it there was a Wilderness altogether desolate and unfrequented; and it was there she pass'd the most part of her melancholy Hours, indulging Woe, and soothing Misery; and had this Way of Life continued, 'tis probable, by a long Habitude of numbing Grief, she might have grown at last as insensible as the Rocks and Woods to which she made her Moan.

BUT now the dreadful Time drew nigh, which was to consummate her Life, and her Misfortunes: She believ'd not that it was in the Power of Fate to make her

her more wretched than she was, and in the Height of Despair, had almost challenged Heaven to add another Woe to those she already felt! — But, alas! she was too soon convinced of the Folly of such an inconsiderate Daring! — She was not to leave the World without knowing, that there were Horrors to be felt infinitely beyond what yet she had any Notion of!

RETURNING one Evening from those shady Recesses, where she was accustomed to sooth her Sorrows, she was surpris'd with the Sight of several new Guests in the House: — He who appeared the Chief, was laid down on a Couch in the Parlour, and two or three Men seem'd very busy about him; but how employed, or who they were, she was too much taken up with her usual Meditations to enquire. — But she had not been above half an Hour in her Chamber before the Woman of the House came up to her, and desired she would come down to Supper; which she was beginning to refuse, on the Account of those Strangers she had seen, when the good Landlady, interrupting her, told her, that it was on the Account of those Strangers that she must not refuse. — The Person who you saw on my Couch (*said she*) is a very great Man: His Servants tell me, he is called the Marquis De Blessure. — Happ'ning to ride this Way, he had the Misfortune of a Fall from his Horse; and my House being the nearest, he was brought hither, and will stay till he has recover'd the Bruises he receiv'd in this unlucky Accident. — He saw you pass through the Parlour (*added she*) and I believe is fallen in Love with you; for he has asked a thousand Questions about you, and begs, in finer Words than I know how to speak, that he may have the Honour of your Company. — Come, come (*continued she, perceiving Anadea made no Answer*) you must not deny: — You don't know your own Interest, if you do: — Take my Word for it, you have snapp'd his Heart: — And I am seldom mistaken, especially in things of this Nature. — You may make

your Fortune, if you will. All the latter Part of this elegant Discourse was lost on her to whom it was addressed:—To hear the Marquis *De Blessure* was by so odd an Accident brought into the same House with her, and that he expressed a Liking to her, appear'd so whimsical an Effect of Fortune, that she could not help thinking it promised something very extraordinary. — She knew he had never seen her as *Anadea*, and hop'd in the Character she now bore, she should be able to draw something from him in Conversation concerning his Son, who in spite of his imagined Falshood, was still dear to her Soul. With the Help of this Consideration, the old Woman found it no very difficult Matter to perswade her to what she desir'd. — She had not been long in the Marquis's Presence, before she had Reason to believe her Landlady in the right: He made a passionate Declaration of Love to her; and presuming on the Greatness of his Quality, and the supposed Meanness of hers, stood not on those Punctilio's of Distance and Respect, which Lovers ordinarily do: He began to accompany his Words with Actions which were not at all pleasing to her: — He press'd her Hands, kiss'd, embraced her; and endeavouring to proceed to greater Liberties, she was oblig'd to repel him with Looks and Expressions, such as she never before had occasion to make use of. — The Manner of her Behaviour was such, as struck an Awe into him, as bold as he was; and though he was possessed with as violent a Desire as ever Man was, and had an equal Share of Pride, yet he desisted from treating her in the Fashion he had begun to do, changed the Form of his Addresses, and entertained her with all the humble Distance of the most beseeching Lover. — The more he conversed with her, the more he found in her to admire: — He continued in the House; and every Day, every Hour his Passion encreas'd, and at length was converted into so sincere a one, that he offered to marry her. — 'Tis easy to imagine, she was extremely surpris'd at this Proposal from a Man of his Humour; but resolving to
make

make her Advantage of it, for the Discovery of what concerned her so much to know; — How, my Lord (*said she*) is it possible that you can harbour a Design of that Nature? — You, I say, who, as the World reports, entail'd a lasting Load of Cruelty and Ingratitude on your only Son, by obliging him to quit the Woman he had sworn to love, only because her Fortune was inferior to his? Can you resolve to be guilty of that Folly yourself, which you were pleas'd to think so unpardonable in him? Had the Mistress of my Son (*answered he*) been possessed of half your Charms, I had not blam'd his Choice; — tho' (*added he*) there were other Reasons besides her Poverty, which render'd his loving her a Crime.

THESE Words gave *Anadea*, in the Character of a third Person, sufficient room to plead her own Cause; which she did so effectually, that he had little to say to excuse his Severity; and also by this Means artfully questioning him, as though in a careless Manner, found out the whole Truth how her Husband was disposed of. — The Discovery that he was not false, gave her a Pleasure, which none but those who tenderly love, and have felt the Tortures of that Love abused, can guess at.

SHE began now to hope her Woes were near a Period; and fancied that if she had it in her Power to reveal the Secret, he might now be prevailed on to pardon all. — She thought he could not condemn that Proof of Passion in his Son, which he had offered to give of his own; and that he would not like her less when known to be *Anadea*, than he did while he believed her a Person more inferior; — but she had given her Promise to *Blessure*, and durst not violate it: — She was, however, continually contriving which way she should evade it, and had certainly, at last, brought herself to confess the whole Affair, if not prevented by a Misfortune of the most dreadful kind that ever happen'd.

THE old *Marquis* finding that not all his Offers worked the Effect he aimed at, and burning with Desire

to enjoy her, resolved to compass it some way or other: In order to this hellish Intention, as they were at Supper, he found an Opportunity, unobserv'd by her, to mingle some Drops of *Opium* in her Drink; which making her more than ordinarily sleepy, she retired to Bed. — In the mean Time, with a Purse of Gold he prevail'd on the mercenary Temper of the Maid of the House, to leave the Key of her Chamber in the Door; and when the Family were all gone to Rest, he softly stole on the unsuspected wretched *Anadea*, got into her Bed; and the curs'd Drug operating on her Senses for the Purpose it was given, he accomplished the incestuous Joy before the Chain of Sleep dissolv'd.

THE Lethargy she was in, was not, however, so strong, as to have the Power o'er Fancy: — Her dear *Blessure* was ever in her Thoughts; and at this Moment, watchful Imagination brought him to her Arms. — In Sleep she press'd him to her panting Breast; and the real Warmth of those Caresses she received, making her Dream more lively, she returned his Ardours with an Extasy too potent for the dull God's Restraint. — Unbounded Rapture broke thro' the Power of Art: — All her Senses regained at once their Liberty, and she awoke, to sleep no more.

THE wild Confusion she was in, between the Effect of what she had taken, and her late Transport, prevented her for some Moments from the Knowledge of her Misfortunes: She was not immediately sensible whether what had past was Reality, or Illusion: But too soon recovering from that Stupidity which now was all that could render her any other than the most wretched Creature under Heaven, and feeling there was a real Substance in the Bed with her which still held her fast embraced, she gave a Shriek which might have alarmed People at a much greater Distance than those of the House were; which the *Marquis* endeavouring to silence by repeated Endearments, and all the Expressions of Tenderness his Passion could inspire, entirely convinced her she was indeed

deed undone in the most dreadful and irreparable Manner. — Her Fury, her Madness, her Horror, was too mighty to vent itself in Words; but struggling with a Force which at that Time seem'd more than human, she unloosed herself from him, flew out of the Bed, and throwing herself on the Floor, cry'd out *Adultery! — Incest! — Damnation!* — and fell into a Fit so violent, so lasting, that the good Woman of the House, who her Shrieks had brought into the Room, believed she was dead.

THE *Marquis* was so much alarmed at this uncommon Testimony of Despair, and the Words she had uttered, that he was wholly incapable either of contributing an Assistance to the bringing her to herself, or answering the Reproaches which the Landlady, who was really a harmless honest Creature, vented for the Abuse he had offer'd, — but stood motionless, and wholly undressed all to his Shirt. — The base Wench, whose Avarice had been the Cause of this, was also there, and between her and her Mistress they laid the miserable *Anadea* on the Bed. — It was towards Morning before she recovered; and when she did, the *Marquis* standing just before her, watching her Return of Sense, for an Explanation of what at present seemed so mysterious to him, the Sight of that detested Object, threw her again into the same Convulsions; and she had no longer an Interval of Speech, than to shriek out again the horrid Sound of *Incest*. While they were thus employed, a prodigious loud Knocking was heard at the Door, which the Maid running down to know the Cause of, presently returned, and told her Mistress, there was a Gentleman who enquired for a young Lady lately come from *Paris*, — and that he would not be deny'd seeing her. — It cannot be our Lodger (*said the Landlady*) for I have often heard her say, she should have no Person come to visit her: But if it were she, you know she is not in a Condition for Company; — therefore go and dismiss him. — The Girl was about to do as she was order'd, when young *Blessure* en-

tered the Chamber; for it was he, who having made his Escape from those to whom the *Marquis* had given the Charge of him, had rid Day and Night till he reached *St. Clou*. His Impatience to embrace his beloved *Anadea*, would not permit him to stay till the Return of the Servant: He followed her directly up Stairs, and perceiving the Disorder in which that distress'd Lady was, he ran to the Bed, and throwing himself on it by her, conjured her to speak to him; — call'd her his Life, his Soul, his Angel, Goddesses, all the endearing Names that Love can form; but among the rest, my charming *Anadea*, my Dear, my lovely Wife, were a thousand Times repeated. — The *Marquis* happening to stand in a Part of the Room, from which the Light was pretty much shelter'd, had not yet been seen by his Son, felt a sudden Horror at the first mention of Wife and *Anadea*, and hearing them again and again repeated, was ready to fall into the same Condition with her whom he had ruin'd: But summoning all his Courage to be satisfy'd of the Truth, came forward to the Place where his Son was, and with as haughty an Accent as the inward Disorders of his Mind would give him leave, accosted him in this Manner: — You are returned, I find (*said he*) without Permission; — but if you hope my Pardon for this, or any former Acts of Disobedience, be quick, and ease my impatient Soul; — tell me who this Woman is, or how related to you. — Not all the Surprise and Grief the *Count* was in to find his Charmer in a Condition so different from what he expected, nor all he felt at the Sight of his Father, in Place and Posture so astonishing, took from him the Power of paying him that Respect which he had been accustomed to do; and falling on his Knees, Proud to obey you, Sir, when Obedience is in my Power, I shall make no Scruple of confessing the virtuous *Anadea* is my Wife, and that this is she; — but why I find her in this Condition, is what I am fearful to demand: But, — he was going on, when the *Marquis*, whose Eyes seem'd to shoot Fire, interrupted

rupted him, by crying, is she your Wife! Your lawful married Wife! My Lord, she is (*resumed his Son*) my wedded Wife, lawfully married, and enjoyed:— And sooner would I have acknowledged it, if— Oh! it is now too soon (*rejoined the Marquis*) since too, too late to save us all from Ruin!— As the *Count* was about to beg an Interpretation of this ambiguous Expression, *Anadea* lifted up her Eyes, and the Strength of her Constitution having by this Time pretty well overcome her Disorders, she had the Use of her Senses enough to know her Husband immediately; and hearing the last Words the *Marquis* had said, rear'd herself up in the Bed, and taking hold of young *Blessure*, as though she meant to embrace him, snatched the Sword he wore by his Side, and plung'd it in her Bosom with such an incredible Strength and Swiftneſs, that had any of the Company been apprised of her Intent, it would have been scarce possible to have prevented her.— Now (*said she*) the shameful Story may be told!— living I could not bear it!— Hate me not after Death, my dear, dear Lord! and I have no more to ask!— With these Words she expir'd; and the almost distracted *Count* was scarce withheld from making the same fatal Use she had done of his Weapon:— But, wild to know the Source of his Misfortune, ask'd a thousand incoherent Questions;— which none presently answering, he raved about the Room like one utterly bereft of Reason.

THE old *Marquis*, whose lawless and ungoverned Passion had occasion'd this Misfortune, still remained in a fixed Posture; but if we may guess by what ensued, felt at least an equal Share in those Agonies which so visibly possessed the *Count*.— Rouzing at length from his seeming Lethargy, he assumed as much as possible a Serenity of Countenance, and ordering his Son to attend him in his Chamber in half an Hour, left that dismal Scene to be filled up by him whose Grievs were too just for Controul.— The Woman of the House would fain have perswaded

him from the Body; but he swore never to forsake it, but so long as to know the Cause of so shocking a Despair as that must be, which had influenced her gentle Soul to such an Act of Horror.

As he was uttering the most piteous Lamentations that Speech e'er form'd,—the Landlady, who stirred not far from him, heard a Pistol go off; and by the Sound, judg'd it was in the next Room.—Frighted and suspicious of the Truth, she started up, and cried, — Heaven grant there be not another Self-murder! — Let us go and see, my Lord (*pursued she*) I fear your Father's Desperation.

YOUNG *Blessure*, to whom all appeared dark and mysterious, on the mention of his Father in that Manner, ran with the Woman to that Room whence the Noise had proceeded, and found the unhappy *Marquis* shot through the Head. — A Paper lay by him on a Table writ by his own Hand, and directed to his Son, — containing the whole Transaction of this fatal Night, — blaming the *Count* for concealing his Marriage, but himself much more for giving way to Desires so injurious to Honour.

To go about to represent in what Manner the afflicted *Blessure* behaved at reading this amazing Discovery, would be to wrong a Grief which scarce Imagination can figure as it ought: — There was nothing that he omitted, to testify the most violent Despair, but laying violent Hands on his own Life; and even that he was but with Difficulty restrained from doing. — He buried both his Father and unfortunate Wife with all possible Solemnity. — Then declaring he had done with the World, made Sale of his vast Patrimony, and distributed it among the Poor; and retiring among the *Capuchins*, linger'd out three or four Years in wasting Sorrow, which at last consumed him; and he was interred by that dear Body, which his adverse Fate had denied him the Blessing of living with.

FANTOMINA:

OR,

LOVE in a Maze.

BEING A

SECRET History

OF AN

AMOUR

Between Two

PERSONS of Condition.

By Mrs. ELIZA HAYWOOD.

*In Love the Victors from the Vanquish'd fly:
They fly that wound, and they pursue that die.*

WALLER.

The THIRD EDITION.

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FANTOMINA:

O. R.,

Love in a Maze.



YOUNG Lady of distinguished Birth, Beauty, Wit, and Spirit, happened to be in a Box one Night at the Playhouse; where, though there were a great Number of celebrated Toasts, she perceived several Gentlemen extremely pleased themselves with entertaining a Woman who sat in a Corner of the Pit, and, by her Air and Manner of receiving them, might easily be known to be one of those who come there for no other Purpose, than to create Acquaintance with as many as seem desirous of it. She could not help testifying her Contempt of Men, who, regardless either of the Play, or Circle, threw away their Time in such a Manner, to some Ladies that sat by her: But they, either less surpris'd by being more accustomed to such Sights, than she who had been bred for the most part in the Country, or not of a Disposition to consider any thing very deeply, took but little Notice of it. She still thought of it, however; and the longer she reflected on it, the greater was her Wonder, that Men, some of whom she knew were accounted to have Wit, should have Tastes so

very depraved.— This excited a Curiosity in her to know in what Manner these Creatures were address'd:— She was young, a Stranger to the World, and consequently to the Dangers of it; and having no body in Town, at that Time, to whom she was oblig'd to be accountable for her Actions, did in every thing as her Inclinations or Humours render'd most agreeable to her: Therefore thought it not in the least a Fault to put in practice a little Whim which came immediately into her Head, to dress herself as near as she cou'd in the Fashion of those Women who make sale of their Favours, and set herself in the Way of being accosted as such a one, having at that Time no other Aim, than the Gratification of an innocent Curiosity.— She no sooner design'd this Frolick, than she put it in Execution; and muffling her Hoods over her Face, went the next Night into the Gallery-Box, and practising as much as she had observ'd, at that Distance, the Behaviour of that Woman, was not long before she found her Disguise had answered the Ends she wore it for:— A Crowd of Purchasers of all Degrees and Capacities were in a Moment gather'd about her, each endeavouring to out-bid the other, in offering her a Price for her Embraces. — She listen'd to 'em all, and was not a little diverted in her Mind at the Disappointment she shou'd give to so many, each of which thought himself secure of gaining her.— She was told by 'em all, that she was the most lovely Woman in the World; and some cry'd, *Gad, she is mighty like my fine Lady such-a-one*, — naming her own Name. She was naturally vain, and receiv'd no small Pleasure in hearing herself prais'd, tho' in the Person of another, and a suppos'd Prostitute; but she dispatch'd as soon as she cou'd all that had hitherto attack'd her, when she saw the accomplish'd *Beauplaisir* was making his Way thro' the Crowd as fast as he was able to reach the Bench she sat on. She had often seen him in the Drawing-Room, had talk'd with him; but then her Quality and reputed Virtue kept him from using her with that Freedom she now expected he wou'd do.

do, and had discover'd something in him, which had made her often think she shou'd not be displeased, if he wou'd abate some Part of his Reserve. — Now was the Time to have her Wishes answer'd: — He look'd in her Face, and fancy'd, as many others had done, that she very much resembled that Lady whom she really was; but the vast Disparity there appear'd between their Characters, prevented him from entertaining even the most distant Thought that they cou'd be the same. — He address'd her at first with the usual Salutations of her pretended Profession, as, *Are you engag'd, Madam? — Will you permit me to wait on you home after the Play? — By Heaven you are a fine Girl! — How long have you us'd this House?* — and such like Questions; but perceiving she had a Turn of Wit, and a genteel Manner in her Raillery, beyond what is frequently to be found among those Wretches, who are for the most part Gentlewomen but by Necessity, few of 'em having had an Education suitable to what they affect to appear, he chang'd the Form of his Conversation, and shew'd her it was not because he understood no better, that he had made use of Expressions so little polite. — In fine, they were infinitely charm'd with each other: He was transported to find so much Beauty and Wit in a Woman, who he doubted not but on very easy Terms he might enjoy; and she found a vast deal of Pleasure in conversing with him in this free and unrestrain'd Manner. They pass'd their Time all the Play with an equal Satisfaction; but when it was over, she found herself involv'd in a Difficulty, which before never enter'd into her Head, but which she knew not well how to get over. — The Passion he profess'd for her, was not of that humble Nature which can be content with distant Adorations: — He resolv'd not to part from her without the Gratifications of those Desires she had inspir'd; and presuming on the Liberties which her suppos'd Function allow'd of, told her she must either go with him to some convenient House of his procuring, or permit him to wait on her to her own Lodgings. —

Lodgings.— Never had she been in such a *Dilemma*: Three or four Times did she open her Mouth to confess her real Quality; but the Influence of her ill Stars prevented it, by putting an Excuse into her Head, which did the Business as well, and at the same time did not take from her the Power of seeing and entertaining him a second Time with the same Freedom she had done this.— She told him, she was under Obligations to a Man who maintain'd her, and whom she durst not disappoint, having promis'd to meet him that Night at a House hard by.— This Story so like what those Ladies sometimes tell, was not at all suspected by *Beauplaisir*; and assuring her he wou'd be far from doing her a Prejudice, desir'd that in Return for the Pain he shou'd suffer in being depriv'd of her Company that Night, that she wou'd order her Affairs, so as not to render him unhappy the next. She gave a solemn Promise to be in the same Box on the Morrow Evening; and they took Leave of each other; he to the Tavern, to drown the Remembrance of his Disappointment; she in a Hackney-chair hurry'd home to indulge Contemplation on the Frolick she had taken, designing nothing less on her first Reflections, than to keep the Promise she had made him, and hugging herself with Joy, that she had the good Luck to come off undiscover'd.

BUT these Cogitations were but of a short Continuance, they vanish'd with the Hurry of her Spirits, and were succeeded by others vastly different and ruinous:— All the Charms of *Beauplaisir* came fresh into her Mind; she languish'd, she almost dy'd for another Opportunity of conversing with him; and not all the Admonitions of her Discretion were effectual to oblige her to deny laying hold of that which offer'd itself the next Night.— She depended on the Strength of her Virtue, to bear her safe thro' Trials more dangerous than she apprehended this to be, and never having been address'd by him as Lady,— was resolv'd to receive his Devoirs as a Town-Mistress, imagining a world of Satisfaction to herself in engaging him in the Character

racter of such a one, and in observing the Surprise he would be in to find himself refused by a Woman, who he supposed granted her Favours without Exception.— Strange and unaccountable were the Whimsies she was possess'd of,— wild and incoherent her Desires,— unfix'd and undetermin'd her Resolutions, but in that of seeing *Beauplaisir* in the Manner she had lately done. As for her Proceedings with him, or how a second Time to escape him, without discovering who she was, she cou'd neither assure herself, nor whether or not in the last Extremity she wou'd do so.— Bent, however, on meeting him, whatever shou'd be the Consequence, she went out some Hours before the Time of going to the Playhouse, and took Lodgings in a House not very far from it, intending, that if he shou'd insist on passing some Part of the Night with her, to carry him there, thinking she might with more Security to her Honour entertain him at a Place where she was Mistress, than at any of his own choosing.

THE appointed Hour being arriv'd, she had the Satisfaction to find his Love in his Affiduity : He was there before her, and nothing cou'd be more tender than the Manner in which he accosted her : But from the first Moment she came in, to that of the Play being done, he continued to assure her, no Consideration shou'd prevail with him to part from her again, as she had done the Night before; and she rejoic'd to think she had taken that Precaution of providing herself with a Lodging, to which she thought she might invite him, without running any Risque, either of her Virtue or Reputation. — Having told him she wou'd admit of his accompanying her home, he seem'd perfectly satisfy'd; and leading her to the Place, which was not above twenty Houses distant, wou'd have order'd a Collation to be brought after them. But she wou'd not permit it, telling him she was not one of those who suffer'd themselves to be treated at their own Lodgings; and as soon as she was come in, sent a Servant, belonging to the House, to provide a very handsome Supper, and Wine, and every thing was serv'd

serv'd to Table in a Manner which shew'd the Director neither wanted Money, nor was ignorant how it shou'd be laid out.

THIS Proceeding, though it did not take from him the Opinion that she was what she appeared to be, yet it gave him Thoughts of her, which he had not before.— He believ'd her a *Mistress*, but believ'd her to be one of a superior Rank, and began to imagine the Possession of her would be much more expensive than at first he had expected: But not being of a Humour to grudge any thing for his Pleasures, he gave himself no farther Trouble, than what were occasioned by Fears of not having Money enough to reach her Price, about him.

SUPPER being over, which was intermixed with a vast deal of amorous Conversation, he began to explain himself more than he had done; and both by his Words and Behaviour let her know, he would not be denied that Happiness the Freedoms she allow'd had made him hope.— It was in vain; she would have retracted the Encouragement she had given:— In vain she endeavoured to delay, till the next Meeting, the fulfilling of his Wishes:— She had now gone too far to retreat:— He was bold;— he was resolute: She fearful, — confus'd, altogether unprepar'd to resist in such Encounters, and rendered more so, by the extreme Liking she had to him.— Shock'd, however, at the Apprehension of really losing her Honour, she struggled all she could, and was just going to reveal the whole Secret of her Name and Quality, when the Thoughts of the Liberty he had taken with her, and those he still continued to prosecute, prevented her, with representing the Danger of being expos'd, and the whole Affair made a Theme for publick Ridicule.— Thus much, indeed, she told him, that she was a Virgin, and had assumed this Manner of Behaviour only to engage him. But that he little regarded, or if he had, would have been far from obliging him to desist;— nay, in the present burning Eagerness of Desire, 'tis probable, that had he been acquainted

acquainted both with who and what she really was, the Knowledge of her Birth would not have influenc'd him with Respect sufficient to have curb'd the wild Exuberance of his luxurious Wishes, or made him in that longing,— that impatient Moment, change the Form of his Addresses. In fine, she was undone; and he gain'd a Victory, so highly rapturous, that had he known over whom, scarce could he have triumphed more. Her Tears, however, and the Distraction she appeared in, after the ruinous Extasy was past, as it heighten'd his Wonder, so it abated his Satisfaction : — He could not imagine for what Reason a Woman, who, if she intended not to be a *Mistress*, had counterfeited the Part of one, and taken so much Pains to engage him, should lament a Consequence which she could not but expect, and till the last Test, seem'd inclinable to grant; and was both surpris'd and troubled at the Mystery.— He omitted nothing that he thought might make her easy; and still retaining an Opinion that the Hope of Interest had been the chief Motive which had led her to act in the Manner she had done, and believing that she might know so little of him, as to suppose, now she had nothing left to give, he might not make that Recompence she expected for her Favours: To put her out of that Pain, he pulled out of his Pocket a Purse of Gold, entreating her to accept of that as an Earnest of what he intended to do for her; assuring her, with ten thousand Protestations, that he would spare nothing, which his whole Estate could purchase, to procure her Content and Happiness. This Treatment made her quite forget the Part she had assum'd, and throwing it from her with an Air of Disdain, Is this a Reward (*said she*) for Condescensions, such as I have yielded to?—Can all the Wealth you are possess'd of, make a Reparation for my Loss of Honour?— Oh! no, I am undone beyond the Power of Heaven itself to help me!— She uttered many more such Exclamations; which the amaz'd *Beauplaisir* heard without being able to reply to, till by Degrees sinking

ing from that Rage of Temper, her Eyes resumed their softning Glances, and guessing at the Consternation he was in, No, my dear *Beauplaisir* (*added she*) your Love alone can compensate for the Shame you have involved me in; be you sincere and constant, and I hereafter shall, perhaps, be satisfy'd with my Fate, and forgive myself the Folly that betray'd me to you.

BEAUPLAISIR thought he could not have a better Opportunity than these Words gave him of enquiring who she was, and wherefore she had feigned herself to be of a Profession which he was now convinc'd she was not; and after he had made her a thousand Vows of an Affection, as inviolable and ardent as she could wish to find in him, entreated she would inform him by what Means his Happiness had been brought about, and also to whom he was indebted for the Bliss he had enjoy'd.—Some Remains of yet unextinguished Modesty, and Sense of Shame, made her blush exceedingly at this Demand; but recollecting herself in a little time, she told him so much of the Truth, as to what related to the Frolick she had taken of satisfying her Curiosity in what Manner *Mistresses*, of the Sort she appeared to be, were treated by those who address'd them; but forbore discovering her true Name and Quality, for the Reasons she had done before, resolving, if he boasted of this Affair, he should not have it in his Power to touch her Character: She therefore said she was the Daughter of a Country Gentleman, who was come to Town to buy Cloaths, and that she was call'd *Fantomina*. He had no Reason to distrust the Truth of this Story, and was therefore satisfy'd with it; but did not doubt by the Beginning of her Conduct, but that in the End she would be in Reality, the thing she so artfully had counterfeited; and had good Nature enough to pity the Misfortunes he imagin'd would be her Lot: But to tell her so, or offer his Advice in that Point, was not his Business, at least, as yet.

THEY

THEY parted not till towards Morning; and she oblig'd him to a willing Vow of visiting her the next Day at Three in the Afternoon. It was too late for her to go home that Night, therefore contented herself with lying there. In the Morning she sent for the Woman of the House to come up to her; and easily perceiving, by her Manner, that she was a Woman who might be influenced by Gifts, made her a Present of a Couple of Broad-pieces, and desir'd her, that if the Gentleman, who had been there the Night before, should ask any Questions concerning her, that he would be told, she was lately come out of the Country, had lodg'd there about a Fortnight, and that her Name was *Fantomina*. I shall (*also added she*) lie but seldom here; nor, indeed, ever come but in those times when I expect to meet him: I would therefore have you order it so, that he may think I am but just gone out, if he should happen by any Accident to call when I am not here; for I would not, for the World, have him imagine I do not constantly lodge here. The Landlady assur'd her she would do every thing as she desired, and gave her to understand she wanted not the Gift of Secrecy.

EVERY thing being ordered at this Home for the Security of her Reputation, she repaired to the other, where she easily excused to an unsuspecting Aunt, with whom she boarded, her having been abroad all Night, saying, she went with a Gentleman and his Lady in a Barge, to a little Country Seat of theirs up the River, all of them designing to return the same Evening; but that one of the Barge-men happ'ning to be taken ill on a sudden, and no other Waterman to be got that Night, they were oblig'd to tarry till Morning. Thus did this Lady's Wit and Vivacity assist her in all, but where it was most needful.—She had Discernment to foresee, and avoid all those Ills which might attend the Loss of her Reputation, but was wholly blind to those of the Ruin of her *Virtue*; and having managed her Affairs so as to secure the *one*, grew perfectly easy with the Remembrance

brance she had forfeited the *other*.— The more she reflected on the Merits of *Beauplaisir*, the more she excused herself for what she had done; and the Prospect of that continued Bliss she expected to share with him, took from her all Remorse for having engaged in an Affair which promised her so much Satisfaction, and in which she found not the least Danger of Misfortune.— If he is really (*said she to herself*) the faithful, the constant Lover he has sworn to be, how charming will be our Amour? — And if he should be false, grow satiated, like other Men, I shall but, at the worst, have the private Vexation of knowing I have lost him; — the Intrigue being a Secret, my Disgrace will be so too: — I shall hear no Whispers as I pass, — She is forsaken: — The odious Word *forsaken* will never wound my Ears; nor will my Wrongs excite either the Mirth or Pity of the talking World: — It will not be even in the Power of my Undoer himself to triumph over me; and while he laughs at, and perhaps despises the fond, the yielding *Fantomina*, he will revere and esteem the virtuous, the reserv'd Lady. — In this Manner did she applaud her own Conduct, and exult with the Imagination that she had more Prudence than all her Sex beside. And it must be confessed, indeed, that she preserved an Oeconomy in the Management of this Intrigue, beyond what almost any Woman but herself ever did: In the first place, by making no Person in the World a Confident in it; and in the next, in concealing from *Beauplaisir* himself the Knowledge who she was; for though she met him three or four Days in a Week, at that Lodging she had taken for that Purpose, yet as much as he employ'd her Time and Thoughts, she was never miss'd from any Assembly she had been accustomed to frequent. — The Business of her Love has engross'd her till Six in the Evening, and before seven she has been dress'd in a different Habit, and in another Place. — Slippers, and a Night-Gown loosely flowing, has been the Garb in which he has left the languishing *Fantomina*; — Lac'd, and adorn'd

adorn'd with all the Blaze of Jewels, has he, in less than an Hour after, beheld at the Royal Chapel, the Palace-Gardens, Drawing-Room, Opera, or Play, the haughty Awe-inspiring Lady. — A thousand Times has he stood amaz'd at the prodigious Likeness between his little Mistress and this Court Beauty; but was still as far from imagining they were the same, as he was the first Hour he had accosted her in the Play-house, though it is not impossible, but that her Resemblance to this celebrated Lady, might keep his Inclination alive something longer than otherwise they would have been; and that it was to the Thoughts of this (as he supposed) unenjoy'd Charmer, she ow'd in great measure the Vigour of his latter Carresses.

BUT he varied not so much from his Sex as to be able to prolong Desire, to any great Length after Possession: The rifled Charms of *Fantomina* soon lost their Poinancy, and grew tasteless and insipid; and when the Season of the Year inviting the Company to the *Bath*, she offer'd to accompany him, he made an Excuse to go without her. She easily perceiv'd his Coldness, and the Reason why he pretended her going would be inconvenient, and endur'd as much from the Discovery as any of her Sex could do: She dissembled it, however, before him, and took her Leave of him with the Shew of no other Concern than his Absence occasion'd: But this she did to take from him all Suspicion of her following him, as she intended, and had already laid a Scheme for. — From her first finding out that he design'd to leave her behind, she plainly saw it was for no other Reason, than that being tir'd of her Conversation, he was willing to be at liberty to pursue new Conquests; and wisely considering that Complaints, Tears, Swoonings, and all the Extravagancies which Women make use of in such Cases, have little Prevailance over a Heart inclin'd to rove, and only serve to render those who practise them more contemptible, by robbing them of that Beauty which alone can bring back the

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fugitive Lover, she resolved to take another Course; and remembring the Height of Transport she enjoyed when the agreeable *Beauplaisir* kneel'd at her Feet, imploring her first Favours, she long'd to prove the same again. Not but a Woman of her Beauty and Accomplishments might have beheld a thousand in that Condition *Beauplaisir* had been; but with her Sex's Modesty, she had not also thrown off another Virtue equally valuable, tho' generally unfortunate, *Constancy*: She loved *Beauplaisir*; it was only he whose Solicitations could give her Pleasure; and had she seen the whole Species despairing, dying for her sake, it might, perhaps have been a Satisfaction to her Pride, but none to her more tender Inclination.— Her Design was once more to engage him, to hear him sigh, to see him languish, to feel the strenuous Pressures of his eager Arms, to be compelled, to be sweetly forced to what she wished with equal Ardour, was what she wanted, and what she had form'd a Stratagem to obtain, in which she promis'd herself Success.

SHE no sooner heard he had left the Town, than making a Pretence to her Aunt, that she was going to visit a Relation in the Country, went towards *Bath*, attended but by two Servants, who she found Reasons to quarrel with on the Road and discharg'd: Cloathing herself in a Habit she had brought with her, she forsook the Coach and went into a Waggon, in which Equipage she arriv'd at *Bath*. The Dress she was in, was a round-ear'd Cap, a short red Petticoat, and a little Jacket of grey Stuff; all the rest of her Accoutrements were answerable to these, and join'd with a broad Country Dialect, a rude unpolish'd Air, which she, having been bred in these Parts, knew very well how to imitate, with her Hair and Eye-brows black'd, made it impossible for her to be known, or taken for any other than what she seem'd. Thus disguis'd did she offer herself to Service in the House where *Beauplaisir* lodg'd, having made it her Business to find out immediately where he was. Notwithstanding this Metamorphosis she

she was still extremely pretty; and the Mistress of the House happening at that Time to want a Maid, was very glad of the Opportunity of taking her. She was presently received into the Family, and had a Post in it (such as she would have chose, had she been left at her Liberty) that of making the Gentlemen's Beds, getting them their Breakfasts, and waiting on them in their Chambers. Fortune in this Exploit was extremely on her Side; there were no others of the Male Sex in the House, than an old Gentleman, who had lost the Use of his Limbs with the Rheumatism, and had come thither for the Benefit of the Waters, and her beloved *Beauplaisir*; so that she was in no Apprehensions of any amorous Violence, but where she wish'd to find it. Nor were her Designs disappointed: He was fir'd with the first Sight of her; and tho' he did not presently take any farther Notice of her, than giving her two or three hearty Kisses, yet she, who now understood that Language but too well, easily saw they were the Prelude to more substantial Joys.——Coming the next Morning to bring his Chocolate, as he had order'd, he catch'd her by the pretty Leg, which the Shortness of her Petticoat did not in the least oppose; then pulling her gently to him, ask'd her, how long she had been at Service? — How many Sweethearts she had? If she had ever been in Love? and many other such Questions, besitting one of the Degree she appear'd to be: All which she answer'd with such seeming Innocence, as more enflamed the amorous Heart of him who talk'd to her. He compelled her to sit in his Lap; and gazing on her blushing Beauties, which, if possible, receiv'd Addition from her plain and rural Dress, he soon lost the Power of containing himself.—— His wild Desires burst out in all his Words and Actions; he call'd her little Angel, Cherubim, swore he must enjoy her, though Death were to be the Consequence, devour'd her Lips, her Breasts with greedy Kisses, held to his burning Bosom her half-yielding, half-reluctant Body, nor suffer'd her to get

loose till he had ravaged all, and glutted each rapacious Sense with the sweet Beauties of the pretty *Celia*, for that was the Name she bore in this second Expedition. — Generous as Liberality itself to all who gave him Joy this way, he gave her a handsome Sum of Gold, which she durst not now refuse, for fear of creating some Mistrust, and losing the Heart she so lately had regain'd; therefore taking it with an humble Curtesy, and a well counterfeited Shew of Surprise and Joy, cry'd, O Law, Sir! what must I do for all this? He laugh'd at her Simplicity, and kissing her again, tho' less fervently than he had done before, bad her not be out of the Way when he came home at Night. She promis'd she would not, and very obediently kept her Word.

His Stay at *Bath* exceeded not a Month; but in that Time his suppos'd Country Lads had persecuted him so much with her Fondness, that in spite of the Eagerness with which he first enjoy'd her, he was at last grown more weary of her, than he had been of *Fantomina*; which she preceiving, would not be troublesome, but quitting her Service, remained privately in the Town till she heard he was on his Return; and in that Time provided herself of another Disguise to carry on a third Plot, which her inventing Brain had furnished her with, once more to renew his twice-decay'd Ardours. The Dress she had order'd to be made, was such as Widows wear in their first Mourning, which, together with the most afflicted and penitential Countenance that ever was seen, was no small Alteration to her who us'd to seem all Gaity. — To add to this, her Hair, which she was accus'd to wear very loose, both when *Fantomina* and *Celia*, was now ty'd back so strait, and her Pinner coming so very forward, that there was none of it to be seen. In fine, her Habit and her Air were so much chang'd, that she was not more difficult to be known in the rude Country Girl, than she was now in the sorrowful Widow.

SHE knew that *Beauplaisir* came alone in his Chariot to the *Bath*, and in the Time of her being Servant in the House where he lodg'd, heard nothing of any body that was to accompany him to *London*, and hop'd he would return in the same Manner he had gone: She therefore hir'd Horses and a Man to attend her to an Inn about ten Miles on this side *Bath*, where having discharg'd them, she waited till the Chariot should come by; which when it did, and she saw that he was alone in it, she called to him that drove it to stop a Moment, and going to the Door saluted the Master with these Words.

THE Distress'd and Wretched, Sir (*said she*) never fail to excite Compassion in a generous Mind; and I hope I am not deceiv'd in my Opinion that yours is such: — You have the Appearance of a Gentleman, and cannot, when you hear my Story, refuse that Assistance which is in your Power to give to an unhappy Woman, who without it, may be render'd the most miserable of all created Beings.

IT would not be very easy to represent the Surprise, so odd an Address created in the Mind of him to whom it was made. — She had not the Appearance of one who wanted Charity; and what other Favour she required he could not conceive: But telling her, she might command any thing in his Power, gave her Encouragement to declare herself in this Manner: You may judge (*resumed she*) by the melancholy Garb I am in, that I have lately lost all that ought to be valuable to Womankind; but it is impossible for you to guess the Greatness of my Misfortune, unless you had known my Husband, who was Master of every Perfection to endear him to a Wife's Affections. — But, notwithstanding, I look on myself as the most unhappy of my Sex in out-living him, I must so far obey the Dictates of my Discretion, as to take care of the little Fortune he left behind him, which being in the Hands of a Brother of his in *London*, will be all carry'd off to *Holland*, where he is going to settle, if I reach not the Town be-

fore he leaves it, I am undone for ever.— To which End I left *Bristol*, the Place where we liv'd, hoping to get a Place in the Stage at *Bath*, but they were all taken up before I came; and being, by a Hurt I got in a Fall, render'd incapable of travelling any long Journey on Horseback, I have no Way to go to *London*, and must be inevitably ruin'd in the Loss of all I have on Earth, without you have good Nature enough to admit me to take Part of your Chariot.

HERE the feigned Widow ended her sorrowful Tale, which had been several times interrupted by a Parenthesis of Sighs and Groans; and *Beauplaisir*, with a complaisant and tender Air, assur'd her of his Readiness to serve her in Things of much greater Consequence than what she desir'd of him; and told her, it would be an Impossibility of denying a Place in his Chariot to a Lady, who he could not behold without yielding one in his Heart. She answered the Compliments he made her but with Tears, which seem'd to stream in such abundance from her Eyes, that she could not keep her Handkerchief from her Face one Moment. Being come into the Chariot, *Beauplaisir* said a thousand handsome Things to persuade her from giving way to so violent a Grief, which, he told her, would not only be destructive to her Beauty, but likewise her Health. But all his Endeavours for Consolment appear'd ineffectual, and he began to think he should have but a dull Journey, in the Company of one who seem'd so obstinately devoted to the Memory of her dead Husband, that there was no getting a Word from her on any other Theme:— But bethinking himself of the celebrated Story of the *Ephesian* Matron, it came into his Head to make Trial, she who seem'd equally susceptible of Sorrow, might not also be so too of Love; and having began a Discourse on almost every other Topick, and finding her still incapable of answering, resolv'd to put it to the Proof, if this would have no more Effect to rouse her sleeping Spirits:— With a gay Air, therefore, though accompanied with
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the greatest Modesty and Respect, he turned the Conversation, as though without Design, on that Joy-giving Passion, and soon discover'd that was indeed the Subject she was best pleas'd to be entertained with; for on his giving her a Hint to begin upon, never any Tongue run more voluble than hers, on the prodigious Power it had to influence the Souls of those possess'd of it, to Actions even the most distant from their Intentions, Principles or Humours. — From that she pass'd to a Description of the Happiness of mutual Affection; — the unspeakable Extasy of those who meet with equal Ardency; and represented it in Colours so lively, and disclos'd by the Gestures with which her Words were accompany'd, and the Accent of her Voice so true a Feeling of what she said, that *Beauplaisir*, without being as stupid, as he was really the contrary, could not avoid perceiving there were Seeds of Fire, not yet extinguish'd, in this fair Widow's Soul, which wanted but the kindling Breath of tender Sighs to light into a Blaze. — He now thought himself as fortunate, as some Moments before he had the Reverse; and doubted not, but, that before they parted, he should find a Way to dry the Tears of this lovely Mourner, to the Satisfaction of them both. He did not, however, offer as he had done to *Fantomina* and *Celia*, to urge his Passion directly to her, but by a thousand little softning Artifices, which he well knew how to use, gave her leave to guess he was enamour'd. When they came to the Inn where they were to lie, he declar'd himself somewhat more freely, and perceiving she did not resent it past Forgiveness, grew more encroaching still: — He now took the Liberty of kissing away her Tears, and catching the Sighs as they issued from her Lips; telling her if Grief was infectious, he was resolv'd to have his Share; protesting he would gladly exchange Passions with her, and be content to bear her Load of Sorrow, if she would as willingly ease the Burden of his Love. — She said little in answer to the strenuous Pressures with which at last he

ventur'd to enfold her; but not thinking it decent, for the Character she had assum'd, to yield so suddenly, and unable to deny both his and her own Inclinations, she counterfeited a Fainting, and fell motionless upon his Breast. — He had no great Notion that she was in a real Fit, and the Room they supp'd in happening to have a Bed in it, he took her in his Arms and laid her on it, believing, that whatever her Dis temper was, that was the most proper Place to convey her to. — He laid himself down by her, and endeavour'd to bring her to herself; and she was too grateful to her kind Physician, at her returning Sense, to remove from the Posture he had put her in, without his Leave.

It may, perhaps, seem strange that *Beauplaisir* should in such near Intimacies continue still deceiv'd: I know there are Men who will swear it is an Impossibility, and that no Disguise could hinder them from knowing a Woman they had once enjoy'd. In answer to these Scruples, I can only say, that besides the Alteration which the Change of Dress made in her, she was so admirably skill'd in the Art of feigning, that she had the Power of putting on almost what Face she pleas'd, and knew so exactly how to form her Behaviour to the Character she represented, that all the Comedians at both Play-houses are infinitely short of her Performances: She could vary her very Glances, tune her Voice to Accents the most different imaginable from those in which she spoke when she appear'd herself. — These Aids from Nature, join'd to the Wiles of Art, and the Distance between the Places where the imagin'd *Fantomina* and *Celia* were, might very well prevent his having any Thought that they were the same, or that the fair *Widow* was either of them: It never so much as enner'd his Head, and though he did fancy he observed in the Face of the latter, Features which were not altogether unknown to him, yet he could not recollect when or where he had known them; — and being told by her, that from her Birth, she had never

never remov'd from *Bristol*, a Place where he never was, he rejected the Belief of having seen her, and suppos'd his Mind had been deluded by an Idea of some other, whom she might have a Resemblance of.

THEY pass'd the Time of their Journey in as much Happiness as the most luxurious Gratification of wild Desires could make them; and when they came to the End of it, parted not without a mutual Promise of seeing each other often. — He told her to what Place she should direct a Letter to him; and she assur'd him she would send to let him know where to come to her, as soon as she was fixed in Lodgings.

SHE kept her Promise, and charm'd with the Continuance of his eager Fondness, went not home, but into private Lodgings, whence she wrote to him to visit her the first Opportunity, and enquire for the Widow *Bloomer*. — She had no sooner dispatched this Billet, than she repair'd to the House where she had lodg'd as *Fantomina*, charging the People if *Beauplaisir* should come there, not to let him know she had been out of Town. From thence she wrote to him, in a different Hand, a long Letter of Complaint, that he had been so cruel in not sending one Letter to her all the Time he had been absent, entreated to see him, and concluded with subscribing herself his unalterably affectionate *Fantomina*. She received in one Day Answers to both these. The first contain'd these Lines.

To the Charming Mrs. BLOOMER.

IT would be impossible, my Angel! for me to express the thousandth Part of that Infinity of Transport, the Sight of your dear Letter gave me. — Never was Woman form'd to charm like you: Never did any look like you, — write like you, — bless like you; — nor did ever Man adore as I do. — Since

Yesterday we parted, I have seem'd a Body without a Soul; and had you not by this inspiring Billet, gave me new Life, I know not what by To-morrow I should have been. — I will be with you this Evening about Five: — O, 'tis an Age till then! — But the cursed Formalities of Duty oblige me to dine with my Lord — who never rises from Table till that Hour; — therefore adieu till then, sweet lovely Mistress of the Soul and all the Faculties of

Your most faithful,

BEAUPLAISIR.

The other was in this Manner:

To the Lovely FANTOMINA.

IF you were half so sensible as you ought of your own Power of charming, you would be assur'd, that to be unfaithful or unkind to you, would be among the Things that are in their very Natures Impossibilities. — It was my Misfortune, not my Fault, that you were not persecuted every Post with a Declaration of my unchanging Passion; but I had unluckily forgot the Name of the Woman at whose House you are, and knew not how to form a Direction that it might come safe to your Hands. — And, indeed, the Reflection how you might misconstrue my Silence, brought me to Town some Weeks sooner than I intended. — If you knew how I have languish'd to renew those Blessings I am permitted to enjoy in your Society, you would rather pity than condemn

Your ever faithful,

BEAUPLAISIR.

P. S. I fear I cannot see you till To-morrow; some Business has unluckily fallen out that will engross my Hours till then. — Once more, my Dear, Adieu.

TRAI

TRAITOR! (*cry'd she*) as soon as she had read them, 'tis thus our silly, fond, believing Sex are serv'd when they put Faith in Man: So had I been deceiv'd and cheated, had I like the rest believ'd, and sat down mourning in Absence, and vainly waiting recover'd Tendernesses. — How do some Women (*continued she*) make their Life a Hell, burning in fruitless Expectations, and dreaming out their Days in Hopes and Fears, then wake at last to all the Horror of Despair? — But I have out-witted even the most subtle of the deceiving Kind, and while he thinks to fool me, is himself the only beguiled Person.

SHE made herself, most certainly, extremely happy in the Reflection on the Success of her Stratagems; and while the Knowledge of his Inconstancy and Levity of Nature kept her from having that real Tenderness for him she would else have had, she found the Means of gratifying the Inclinations she had for his agreeable Person, in as full a Manner as she could wish. She had all the Sweets of Love, but as yet had tasted none of the Gall, and was in a State of Contentment, which might be envy'd by the more delicate.

WHEN the expected Hour arriv'd, she found that her Lover had lost no part of the Fervency with which he had parted from her; but when the next Day she received him as *Fantomina*, she perceiv'd a prodigious Difference; which led her again into Reflections on the Unaccountableness of Men's Fancies, who still prefer the last Conquest, only because it is the last. — Here was an evident Proof of it; for there could not be a Difference in Merit, because they were the same Person; but the Widow Bloomer was a more new Acquaintance than *Fantomina*, and therefore esteem'd more valuable. This, indeed, must be said of *Beauplaisir*, that he had a greater Share of good Nature than most of his Sex, who, for the most part, when they are weary of an Intrigue, break it entirely off, without any Regard to the Despair of the abandon'd Nymph. Though he

retain'd no more than a bare Pity and Complaisance for *Fantomina*, yet believing she lov'd him to an Excess, would not entirely forsake her, though the Continuance of his Visits was now become rather a Penance than a Pleasure.

THE Widow *Bloomer* triumph'd some time longer over the Heart of this Inconstant, but at length her Sway was an End, and she sunk in this Character, to the same Degree of Tastelesness, as she had done before in that of *Fantomina* and *Celia*. — She presently perceiv'd it, but bore it as she had always done; it being but what she expected, she had prepar'd herself for it, and had another Project in *Embryo*, which she soon ripen'd into Action. She did not, indeed, compleat it altogether so suddenly as she had done the others, by reason there must be Persons employ'd in it; and the Aversion she had to any *Confidants* in her Affairs, and the Caution with which she had hitherto acted, and which she was still determin'd to continue, made it very difficult for her to find a Way, without breaking thro' that Resolution, to compass what she wish'd. — She got over the Difficulty at last, however, by proceeding in a Manner, if possible, more extraordinary than all her former Behaviour: — Muffling herself up in her Hood one Day, she went into the Park about the Hour when there are a great many necessitous Gentlemen, who think themselves above doing what they call little Things for a Maintenance, walking in the *Mall*, to take a *Camelion* Treat, and fill their Stomachs with Air instead of Meat. Two of those, who by their Physiognomy she thought most proper for her Purpose, she beckon'd to come to her; and taking them into a Walk more remote from Company, began to communicate the Business she had with them in these Words: I am sensible, Gentlemen (*said she*) that, through the Blindness of Fortune, and Partiality of the World, Merit frequently goes unrewarded, and that those of the best Pretensions meet with the least Encouragement: — I ask you
Pardon

Pardon (*continued she*) perceiving they seem'd surpris'd, if I am mistaken in the Notion, that you two may, perhaps, be of the Number of those who have Reason to complain of the Injustice of Fate; but if you are such as I take you for, have a Proposal to make you, which may be of some little Advantage to you. Neither of them made any immediate Answer, but appear'd bury'd in Consideration for some Moments. At length, We should, doubtless, Madam (*said one of them*) willingly come into any Measures to oblige you, provided they are such as may bring us into no Danger, either as to our Persons or Reputations. That which I require of you (*resumed she*) has nothing in it criminal: All that I desire is *Secrecy* in what you are intrusted, and to disguise yourselves in such a Manner as you cannot be known, if hereafter seen by the Person on whom you are to impose. — In fine, the Business is only an innocent Frolick, but if blaz'd abroad, might be taken for too great a Freedom in me: — Therefore, if you resolve to assist me, here are five Pieces to drink my Health, and assure you, that I have not discours'd you on an Affair I design not to proceed in; and when it is accomplish'd fifty more lie ready for your Acceptance. These Words, and, above all, the Money, which was a Sum which, 'tis probable, they had not seen of a long Time, made them immediately assent to all she desir'd, and press for the Beginning of their Employment: But Things were not yet ripe for Execution; and she told them, that the next Day they should be let into the Secret, charging them to meet her in the same Place at an Hour she appointed. 'Tis hard to say, which of these Parties went away best pleas'd; *they*, that Fortune had sent them so unexpected a Windfal; or *she*, that she had found Persons, who appeared so well qualified to serve her.

INDEFATIGABLE in the Pursuit of whatsoever her Humour was bent upon, she had no sooner left her new engag'd Emissaries, than she went in search of a House for the compleating her Project. — She
pitch'd

pitch'd on one very large and magnificently furnish'd, which she hir'd by the Week, giving them the Money before-hand, to prevent any Enquiries. The next Day she repaired to the Park, where she met the punctual 'Squires of low Degree; and ordering them to follow her to the House she had taken, told them they must condescend to appear like Servants, and gave each of them a very rich Livery. Then writing a Letter to *Beauplaisir*, in a Character vastly different from either of those she had made use of, as *Fantomina*, or the fair Widow *Bloomer*, order'd one of them to deliver it into his own Hands, to bring back an Answer, and to be careful that he sifted out nothing of the Truth.—— I do not fear (*said she*) that you should discover to him who I am, because that is a Secret, of which you yourselves are ignorant; but I would have you be so careful in your Replies, that he may not think the Concealment springs from any other Reasons than your great Integrity to your Trust.—— Seem therefore to know my whole Affairs; and let your refusing to make him Partaker in the Secret, appear to be only the Effect of your Zeal for my Interest and Reputation. Promises of entire Fidelity on the one Side, and Reward on the other, being past, the Messenger made what haste he could to the House of *Beauplaisir*; and being there told where he might find him, perform'd exactly the Injunction that had been given him. But never Astonishment exceeding that which *Beauplaisir* felt at the reading this Billet, in which he found these Lines:

To the All-conquering BEAUPLAISIR.

I Imagine not that 'tis a new thing to you, to be told, you are the greatest Charm in Nature to our Sex: I shall therefore, not to fill up my Letter with any impertinent Praises on your Wit or Person, only tell you, that I am infinite in Love with both, and if you have a Heart not too deeply engag'd, should think my-
self

self the happiest of my Sex in being capable of inspiring it with some Tenderness. — There is but one Thing in my Power to refuse you, which is the Knowledge of my Name, which believing the Sight of my Face will render no Secret, you must not take it ill that I conceal from you. — The Bearer of this is a Person I can trust; send by him your Answer; but endeavour not to dive into the Meaning of this Mystery, which will be impossible for you to unravel, and at the same time very much disoblige me: — But that you may be in no Apprehensions of being impos'd on by a Woman unworthy of your Regard, I will venture to assure you, the first and greatest Men in the Kingdom would think themselves blest to have that Influence over me you have, though unknown to yourself acquir'd. — But I need not go about to raise your Curiosity, by giving you any Idea of what my Person is; if you think fit to be satisfied, resolve to visit me To-morrow about three in the Afternoon; and though my Face is hid, you shall not want sufficient Demonstration, that she who takes these unusual Measures to commence a Friendship with you, is neither old, nor deform'd. Till then I am,

Yours,

INCOGNITA.

HE had scarce come to the Conclusion, before he ask'd the Person who brought it, from what Place he came; — the Name of the Lady he serv'd; — if she were a Wife, or Widow, and several other Questions directly opposite to the Directions of the Letter; but Silence would have avail'd him as much as did all those Testimonies of Curiosity: No Italian Bravo, employ'd in a Business of the like Nature, perform'd his Office with more Artifice; and the impatient Enquirer was convinc'd, that nothing but doing as he was desired, could give him any Light into the Character of the Woman who declar'd
so

so violent a Passion for him; and little fearing any Consequence which could ensue from such an Encounter, resolv'd to rest satisfy'd till he was inform'd of every thing from herself, not imagining this *In-cognita* varied so much from the Generality of her Sex, as to be able to refuse the Knowledge of any thing to the Man she lov'd with that Transcendency of Passion she profess'd, and which his many Successes with the Ladies gave him Encouragement enough to believe. He therefore took Pen and Paper, and answer'd her Letter in Terms tender enough for a Man who had never seen the Person to whom he wrote. The Words were as follows:

To the Obliging and Witty
INCOGNITA.

THough to tell me I am happy enough to be lik'd by a Woman, such as by your manner of Writing I imagine you to be, is an Honour which I can never sufficiently acknowledge, yet I know not how I am able to content myself with admiring the Wonders of your Wit alone: I am certain, a Soul like yours must shine in your Eyes with a Vivacity, which must bless all they look on. — I shall, however, endeavour to restrain myself in those Bounds you are pleas'd to set me, till by the Knowledge of my inviolable Fidelity, I may be thought worthy of gazing on that Heaven I am now but to enjoy in Contemplation. — You need not doubt my glad Compliance with your obliging Summons: There is a Charm in your Lines, which gives too sweet an Idea of their lovely Author to be resisted. — I am all impatient for the blissful Moment, which is to throw me at your Feet, and give me an Opportunity of convincing you that I am,

Your everlasting Slave,

BEAUPLAISIE.

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NOTHING could be more pleas'd than she, to whom it was directed, at the Receipt of this Letter; but when she was told how inquisitive he had been concerning her Character and Circumstances, she could not forbear laughing heartily to think of the Tricks she had play'd him, and applauding her own Strength of Genius, and Force of Resolution, which by such unthought-of Ways could triumph over her Lover's Inconstancy, and render that very Temper, which to other Women is the greatest Curse, a Means to make herself more blest'd. — Had he been faithful to me (*said she, to herself*) either as *Fantomina*, or *Celia*, or the *Widow Bloomer*, the most violent Passion, if it does not change its Object, in Time will wither: Possession naturally abates the Vigour of Desire, and I should have had, at best, but a cold, insipid, husband-like Lover in my Arms; but by these Arts of passing on him as a new Mistress whenever the Ardour, which alone makes Love a Blessing, begins to diminish, for the former one, I have him always raving, wild, impatient, longing, dying. — O that all neglected Wives, and fond abandon'd Nymphs would take this Method! — Men would be caught in their own Snare, and have no Cause to scorn our easy, weeping, wailing Sex! Thus did she pride herself, as if secure she never should have any Reason to repent the present Gaiety of her Honour. The Hour drawing near in which he was to come, she dress'd herself in as magnificent a Manner, as if she were to be that Night at a Ball at Court, endeavouring to repair the want of those Beauties which the Vizard should conceal, by setting forth the others with the greatest Care and Exactness. Her fine Shape, and Air, and Neck, appear'd to great Advantage; and by that which was to be seen of her, one might believe the rest to be perfectly agreeable. *Beauplaisir* was prodigiously charm'd, as well with her Appearance, as with the Manner she entertain'd him: But though he was wild with Impatience for the Sight of a Face which belong'd to
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so exquisite a Body, yet he would not immediately press for it, believing before he left her he should easily obtain that Satisfaction. — A noble Collation being over, he began to sue for the Performance of her Promise of granting every thing he could ask, excepting the Sight of her Face, and Knowledge of her Name. It would have been a ridiculous Piece of Affection in her to have seem'd coy in complying with what she herself had been the first in desiring : She yielded without even a Shew of Reluctance : And if there be any true Felicity in an Amour such as theirs, both here enjoy'd it to the full. But not in the Height of all their mutual Raptures, could he prevail on her to satisfy his Curiosity with the Sight of her Face : She told him that she hop'd he knew so much of her, as might serve to convince him, she was not unworthy of his tenderest Regard ; and if he cou'd not content himself with that which she was willing to reveal, and which was the Conditions of their meeting, dear as he was to her, she would rather part with him for ever, than consent to gratify an Inquisitiveness which, in her Opinion, had no Business with his Love. It was in vain that he endeavour'd to make her sensible of her Mistake ; and that this Restraint was the greatest Enemy imaginable to the Happiness of them both : She was not to be persuaded, and he was oblig'd to desist his Solicitations, though determin'd in his Mind to compass what he so ardently desir'd, before he left the House. He then turned the Discourse wholly on the Violence of the Passion he had for her ; and express'd the greatest Discontent in the World at the Apprehensions of being separated ; — swore he could dwell for ever in her Arms, and with such an undeniable Earnestness pressed to be permitted to tarry with her the whole Night, that had she been less charm'd with his renew'd Eagerness of Desire, she scarce would have had the Power of refusing him ; but in granting this Request, she was not without a Thought that he had another Reason for making it besides the

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Extremity of his Passion, and had it immediately in her Head how to disappoint him.

THE Hours of Repose being arriv'd, he begg'd she would retire to her Chamber; to which she consented, but oblig'd him to go to Bed first; which he did not much oppose, because he suppos'd she would not lie in her Mask, and doubted not but the Morning's Dawn would bring the wish'd Discovery. — The two imagin'd Servants usher'd him to his new Lodgings; where he lay some Moments in all the Perplexity imaginable at the Oddness of this Adventure. But she suffer'd not these Cogitations to be of any long Continuance: She came, but came in the Dark; which being no more than he expected by the former part of her Proceedings, he said nothing of; but as much Satisfaction as he found in her Embraces, nothing ever long'd for the Approach of Day with more Impatience than he did. At last it came; but how great was his Disappointment, when by the Noises he heard in the Street, the Hurry of the Coaches, and the Crys of Penny-Merchants, he was convinc'd it was Night no where but with him? He was still in the same Darkness as before; for she had taken care to blind the Windows in such a Manner, that not the least Chink was left to let in Day. — He complain'd of her Behaviour in Terms that she would not have been able to resist yielding to, if she had not been certain it would have been the Ruin of her Passion: — She therefore answered him only as she had done before; and getting out of the Bed from him, flew out of the Room with too much Swiftmess for him to have overtaken her, if he had attempted it. The Moment she left him, the two Attendants enter'd the Chamber, and plucking down the Implements which had skreen'd him from the Knowledge of that which he so much desir'd to find out, restored his Eyes once more to Day: — They attended to assist him in dressing, brought him Tea, and by their Obsequiousness, let him see there was but one Thing which the Mistress of them would not gladly oblige

oblige him in. — He was so much out of Humour, however, at the Disappointment of his Curiosity, that he resolv'd never to make a second Visit. — Finding her in an outer Room, he made no Scruple of expressing the Sense he had of the little Trust she repos'd in him, and at last plainly told her, he could not submit to receive Obligations from a Lady, who thought him incapable of keeping a Secret, which she made no Difficulty of letting her Servants into. — He resent'd, — he once more entreated, — he said all that Man could do, to prevail on her to unfold the Mystery; but all his Adjurations were fruitless; and he went out of the House determin'd never to re-enter it, till she should pay the Price of his Company with the Discovery of her Face and Circumstances. — She suffer'd him to go with this Resolution, and doubted not but he would recede from it, when he reflected on the happy Moments they had pass'd together; but if he did not, she comforted herself with the Design of forming some other Stratagem, with which to impose on him a fourth Time.

SHE kept the House, and her Gentlemen-Equipage for about a Fortnight; in which Time she continu'd to write to him as *Fantomina* and the Widow *Bloomer*, and received the Visits he sometimes made to each; but his Behaviour to both was grown so cold, that she began to grow as weary of receiving his now insipid Caresses as he was of offering them: She was beginning to think in what Manner she should drop these two Characters, when the sudden Arrival of her Mother, who had been some time in a foreign Country, oblig'd her to put an immediate Stop to the Course of her whimsical Adventures. — That Lady, who was severely virtuous, did not approve of many Things she had been told of the Conduct of her Daughter; and though it was not in the Power of any Person in the World to inform her of the Truth of what she had been guilty of, yet she heard enough to make her keep her afterwards in a
 Restraint,

Restraint, little agreeable to her Humour, and the Liberties to which she had been accustomed.

BUT this Confinement was not the greatest Part of the Trouble of this now afflicted Lady: She found the Consequences of her amorous Follies would be, without almost a Miracle, impossible to be conceal'd: — She was with Child; and though she would easily have found Means to have skreen'd even this from the Knowledge of the World, had she been at liberty to have acted with the same unquestionable Authority over herself, as she did before the coming of her Mother, yet now all her Invention was at a Loss for a Stratagem to impose on a Woman of her Penetration: — By eating little, lacing prodigious strait, and the Advantage of a great Hoop-Petticoat, however, her Bigness was not taken notice of, and, perhaps, she would not have been suspected till the Time of her going into the Country, where her Mother design'd to send her, and from whence she intended to make her escape to some Place where she might be deliver'd with Secrecy, if the Time of it had not happen'd much sooner than she expected. — A Ball being at Court, the good old Lady was willing she should partake of the Diversion of it, as a Farewel to the Town. — It was there she was seiz'd with those Pangs, which none in her Condition are exempt from: — She could not conceal the sudden Rack which all at once invaded her; or had her Tongue been mute, her wildly rolling Eyes, the Distortion of her Features, and the Convulsions which shook her whole Frame, in spite of her, would have reveal'd she labour'd under some terrible Shock of Nature. — Every body was surpris'd, every body was concern'd, but few guessed at the Occasion. — Her Mother griev'd beyond Expression, doubted not but she was struck with the Hand of Death; and order'd her to be carried Home in a Chair, while herself follow'd in another. — A Physician was immediately sent for: But he presently perceiving what was her Distemper, call'd the old
Lady

Lady aside, and told her, it was not a Doctor of his Sex, but one of her own, her Daughter stood in need of. — Never was Astonishment and Horror greater than that which seiz'd the Soul of this afflicted Parent at these Words : She could not for a Time believe the Truth of what she heard, but he insisting on it, and conjuring her to send for a Midwife, she was at length convinc'd of it. — All the Pity and Tenderness she had been for some Moments before possess'd of, now vanish'd, and were succeeded by an adequate Shame and Indignation :— She flew to the Bed where her Daughter was lying, and telling her what she had been inform'd of, and which she was now far from doubting, commanded her to reveal the Name of the Person whose Insinuations had drawn her to this Dishonour. — It was a great while before she could be brought to confess any thing, and much longer before she could be prevailed on to name the Man whom she so fatally had lov'd; but the Rack of Nature growing more fierce, and the enraged old Lady protesting no Help should be afforded her while she persisted in her Obstinacy, she, with great Difficulty and Hesitation in her Speech, at last pronounc'd the Name of *Beau-plaisir*. She had no sooner satisfy'd her weeping Mother, than that sorrowful Lady sent Messengers, at the same Time, for a Midwife, and for that Gentleman who had occasion'd the other's being wanted. — He happen'd by Accident to be at Home, and immediately obey'd the Summons, though prodigiously surpris'd what Business a Lady so much a Stranger to him could have to impart. — But how much greater was his Amazement, when taking him into her Closet, she there acquainted him with her Daughter's Misfortune of the Discovery she had made, and how far he was concern'd in it? — All the Idea one can form of wild Astonishment, was mean to what he felt. — He assur'd her, that the young Lady her Daughter was a Person whom he had never, more than at a Distance, admir'd : — That he had in-

indeed spoke to her in publick Company, but that he never had a Thought which tended to her Dishonour.— His Denials, if possible, added to the Indignation she was before inflam'd with :— She had no longer Patience; and carrying him into the Chamber, where she was just deliver'd of a fine Girl, cry'd out, I will not be impos'd on : The Truth by one of you shall be reveal'd.— *Beauplaisir* being brought to the Bed-side, was beginning to address himself to the Lady in it, to beg she would clear the Mistake her Mother was involv'd in; when she covering herself with the Cloaths, and ready to die a second Time with the inward Agitations of her Soul, shriek'd out, Oh, I am undone !— I cannot live, and bear this Shame !— But the old Lady believing that now or never was the Time to dive into the Bottom of this Mystery, forcing her to rear her Head, told her, she should not hope to escape the Scrutiny of a Parent she had dishonour'd in such a Manner, and pointing to *Beauplaisir*, Is this the Gentleman (*said she*) to whom you owe your Ruin? or have you deceiv'd me by a fictitious Tale? Oh ! no (*resum'd the trembling Creature*) he is, indeed, the innocent Cause of my Undoing :— Promise me your Pardon (*continued she*) and I will relate the Means. Here she ceas'd, expecting what she would reply; which on hearing *Beauplaisir* cry out, What mean you, Madam, I your Undoing, who never harbour'd the least Design on you in my Life ! she did in these Words, Though the Injury you have done your Family (*said she*) is of a Nature which cannot justly hope Forgiveness, yet be assur'd, I shall much sooner excuse you when satisfied of the Truth, than while I am kept in a Suspence, if possible, as vexatious as the Crime itself is to me. Encouraged by this, she related the whole Truth. And tis difficult to determine, if *Beauplaisir*, or the Lady, were most surpris'd at what they heard; he, that he should have been blinded so often by her Artifices; or she, that so young a Creature should

should have the Skill to make use of them. Both sat for some Time in a profound Resvery; till at length she broke it first in these Words: Pardon, Sir (*said she*) the Trouble I have given you: I must confess it was with a Design to oblige you to repair the supposed Injury you had done this unfortunate Girl, by marrying her, but now I know not what to say: — The Blame is wholly hers, and I have nothing to request further of you, than that you will not divulge the distracted Folly she has been guilty of. — He answered her in Terms perfectly polite; but made no Offer of that which, perhaps, she expected, though could not, now inform'd of her Daughter's Proceedings, demand. He assured her, however, that if she would commit the new-born Lady to his Care, he would discharge it faithfully. But neither of them would consent to that; and he took his Leave, full of Cogitations, more confus'd than ever he had known in his whole Life. He continued to visit there, to enquire after her Health every Day; but the old Lady perceiving there was nothing likely to ensue from these Civilities, but, perhaps, a renewing of the Crime, she entreated him to refrain; and as soon as her Daughter was in a Condition, sent her to a Monastery in *France*, the Abbess of which had been her particular Friend. And thus ended an Intrigue, which, considering the Time it lasted, was as full of Variety as any, perhaps, that many Ages has produced.

F I N I S.



